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TWENTIETH CENTURY POETRY

DRINKWATER

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PREFACE

It is only in recent years that in studying English in our universities we have thought of literature as a continuous process, like the growth of an organism, proceeding with change but without cessation until the culture of which it is a part ends and is forgotten. This curious incomprehension has been due, of course, to the history of the teaching of literature in the native tongue, which did not begin at all until within the memory of living men, and came then as a substitute for, or parallel with, the ancient classics. These, while alive in a very true sense, had lost their capacity for extension when the languages in which they were written had become lifeless upon men's tongues, and therefore, as was natural under the circumstances, the examples of the native literature which were chosen for study and teaching were taken from the books which most resembled the classics, in that time had mellowed them and the life which they expressed was so long past that it could be viewed in historical perspective, and studied with all the difficulties of interpretation which accompany the records of an unfamiliar experience. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, and Gray, who were, I believe, the first English authors to become a part of the college curriculum in the United States, could be, and were, studied as the classics are studied, textually, grammatically, historically, and for the disciplining of the mind.

But as the study of English gradually extended until it became the backbone of our education in the humanities, the area of the literary field was also extended until it stretched back as far as the Anglo-Saxons, and forward to the prose and poetry of yesterday. Neverthe-

less, a narrow conception of all these works of imagination as examples merely, to be chosen for study because they were better, or more interesting, or harder, or more relevant, remained. Hence university curriculums in which "modern" literature is never mentioned, and others in which the most heralded courses are entirely in writing of the day, which is conceived of as necessarily closer to our own experience and therefore more important.

This book has been conceived of in a spirit very different from either of these fallacious practices. Its authors think of poetry in English as a pattern in a tapestry always being woven, where the figures vary in scope and excellence, but are all part of a design which breaks only at the loose fringes of the last moment of our time. They feel that the student of the poetry of his own language can never know it except by an acquaintance with both its past and its present, and that the present is meaningless without a knowledge of the great English masterpieces (which may be assumed for the readers of this volume) and without enough of the past included to make complete figures in the poetical tapestry.

They have chosen, therefore, somewhat arbitrarily, the period 1900 to 1929 for this volume, not because 1900 has any meaning, except as the formal end of a century, but rather because somewhere in these three decades comes a real change from what we call the nineteenth-century to what we call the twentieth-century spirit, a change which came over prose as well as poetry, fiction as well as the writing of history, political and social thought and experience as well as literature. It was a change that was accelerated, but not caused, by the Great War.

Hence, in the poetry of 1900 to 1929 are our links with the most immediate past, our heralds of the future, our transitional writers, and the poets who could have written as they do only in the modern days of the last

decade. It is a unit of time more valuable for us than a relatively homogeneous period, such as, for example, 1700 to 1730, for it contains *our* present, and therefore carries the tapestry up to the edge where literature is still weaving in patterns drawn from our own emotional life.

The two American editors and their English colleague have made no attempt to group the poetry of the two English-speaking nations in the common categories in which both often belong. It has seemed more interesting and more useful to arrange each national literature separately, and let the resemblances in technique, in tendency, or in subject matter, like the differences, tell their own story. Not the least valuable quality of a dual collection, like this one, is the object lesson in the nature of literature itself, which, being an art, follows laws which are human rather than national and racial, and yet, being an expression of the imagination of men and women, is inevitably also national, racial, in some of its characteristics.

It should be understood that no estimate of the relative values of British and American poetry has been intended by the space allotted to each country. Since this book is first published in America and will presumably be most widely used here, it seemed advisable to give a fuller representation of American poetry, but this, in practice, proved to be necessary in any case, for American poetry, especially in the second decade of our period, has been so widely and so variously written, with so many attempts at new forms and so much inclusion of new subject matter drawn from a vast and mingled population, that only a large selectiveness could adequately represent it. As it is, we have been forced to omit many good poets on account of sheer lack of space.

We believe, however, that for both British and Americans, and for both British and American literature, the selections here printed are truly representative. It

would have been easy to make a book of greater absolute quality by choosing only from the few outstanding writers of the period. That course, however valuable it might have been for the study of pure poetry, was not the way by which the poetry of an age so nearly contemporary could be truly presented. For we do not know, and cannot yet tell, which of the authors in the decades closest to our own represent the rising curve which leads toward the future, nor even with any certainty which belong among the permanently best. We are dealing with literature that still has the glow of the moment on it, where the ink, if dry, is not yet faded. Hence, the wide range of authors in this collection, their variety, the seeming impossibility of fitting more than a few of them into a definition, a group, a "period," is, we believe, one of the chief merits of the book. For all literature must be taught for the life in it, and contemporary literature is still unclassified, unsettled, and actively as well as passively alive.

H. S. C.

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TWENTIETH-CENTURY POETRY

* *

BRITISH POETRY SINCE 1900

TWENTIETH-CENTURY POETRY

BRITISH POETRY SINCE 1900

It is, I think, Swinburne who somewhere says that to speak of bad poetry or a bad poem is a contradiction in terms. We will leave it at that. With the trivial versifying that drifts about the literature of any age we have no concern. When we speak of a poem we mean something that is entitled to that high distinction.

This collection is intended to be representative of British poetry during the first quarter of the present century. It makes no claim to be comprehensive. Several poets are omitted whose presence would grace our company. In many cases the reason is that their work seemed to be too desultory or occasional for inclusion. To search the journals of the past twenty-five years would be to discover a great number of meritable poems, each one of which might almost be said to constitute its author's collected works. In two or three instances the matter has been decided by questions of copyright. It may be, indeed, that I have overlooked some important poets through inadvertence or ignorance. If so, I am sorry.

But that the selection here given is representative I have no doubt. It may be that much might be added to it with advantage, but I am sure that any judicious reader who is familiar with the poems here printed will be able to form an accurate judgment of the general nature and tendencies of lyric poetry in England since

1900. No anthology can hope to serve as more than an introduction to the study of a period. The poets here represented have in almost every case published a very considerable volume of work, and the reader who wishes to amplify the knowledge here gathered will have to consult that work at greater length. When he has familiarized himself with these abstracts, he will know the kind of direction in which his adventure is likely to take him. And in the mean time, no one who cares for poetry is likely to complain that in the mere joy of reading the present pages are not fertile.

Lyric poetry has been indicated in this connection, since it is obvious that our scope must be confined to that. Many of the poets concerned have written verse dramas which have to be disregarded, nor can we take notice of such longer poems as *The Dynasts*, *Reynard the Fox*, Charles Doughty's Epics, or Alfred Noyes's *Torch-bearers*. In this matter of lyric selection some poets, Mr. Davies and Mr. de la Mare for example, may be found to do themselves fuller justice than others whose designs are generally cast on a larger scale. But this is in the luck of things, and cannot be helped.

The selection has been divided into four groups. In the first of these, which includes the work of poets who had established themselves before 1900, but have continued to write in the new century, the choice has been entirely arbitrary. It inevitably began with Thomas Hardy; and the writers who accompany him, while they have been chosen largely by personal preference, are fully representative of the poets who connected the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. In the second group are included poets who were just too old or too well known to be eligible for Mr. Edward Marsh's Georgian anthologies, the first of which covered the years 1911–12, or who at most were represented in the first volume of that series. The third group includes the poets of these Georgian anthologies, with the reser-

vation that a few writers who appeared only in the last volume, or the last but one, have been omitted as not having yet done such work as can be considered fully representative of themselves or of the period that we are covering. Discrimination at this point has been a little difficult, and had to depend largely upon impulse. In two or three instances there is no doubt that the poets omitted are already moving beyond high promise, but an editor may reasonably claim that he has to stop somewhere. In this group are two or three poets who do not appear in Mr. Marsh's volumes. In the fourth and last group are included poets who did not come into Mr. Marsh's scheme, most of them poets who first began to be heard of when that scheme was completed. Within each of these groups an attempt has been made to place the poets in orderly arrangement, but it is needless to lay any stress on this circumstance. After all, this is a book of poetry and not a time-table.

Whatever critical observations seem necessary upon each poet separately will be found in the short individual notices placed elsewhere. All that remains to do here is to offer a brief summary of the general character of British poetry in our chosen period.

By 1900, British versification had recovered from the enervating influence of Swinburne's supreme metrical virtuosity. It need hardly be added in parenthesis that this is said with full recognition of Swinburne's greatness as a poet. But for a long time many of his successors, falling under the spell of his rhythm, were seduced also into accepting his world. And Swinburne's world was of no use to any poet but Swinburne. A great deal of the poetry of the nineties revealed an emasculated mood that was Swinburne run to waste. But in the nineties, too, there were other poets who were slowly revitalizing the mood of British poetry in firm iambic outline. This argument cannot be expanded here, but it is not difficult to understand why so fastidi-

ous a critic as Alice Meynell, writing in the near contacts of that difficult period, should have had a rooted horror of anapests. With the new century, the authority of scented boudoirs, of artificial lagoons lit by Chinese lanterns, of a fancy that likened life to a pack of cards, and of all the decadence that Swinburne would have hated but for which he was in part responsible, had been discredited. A robuster temper was at work and a robuster poetry was the consequence. The cult of the open road fell into a specious trickery at times, but it did take poetry out into the air again. The renewed vigor sharpened the imagination of the poets, that is to say it made them more exacting and definite in their images. Indeed, a school conscious of the necessity for doing this, but a little indifferent to the other necessities of poetry, styled itself *Imagiste*. And although British poetry of 1900 to 1925 presents a great variety of aspects, it has on the whole this vigorous precision in common. Whatever its importance may be it is a great deal more than elegant accomplishment.

Reference to the self-styled *Imagistes* reminds us that there have been several sincere experimental groups of poets during our period, governed by some particular enthusiasm of revolt. Most notable among these, perhaps, have been the advocates of free verse. It has not seemed necessary to specify these groups separately in our selection. It so happens that among them there have been some admirable writers, though I believe them to have been rarer in England than in America. An authoritative poet associated with any faction takes his place in poetry, but the factions in themselves seem to be of no more than momentary significance. Every poem that is ever written is an experiment, but, if it is to survive, its purpose must not be to prove a theory. Any poet these last three hundred years has been likely to write a poem at some time or another in free verse, but to claim that the poetry of the future will make free

verse its habit is to disregard all the evidence. Omissions or not, the poets in this selection do unquestionably represent the very considerable power of British poetry from 1900 to 1925, and it will be observed that in their common practice they employ traditional forms, impressing them always with fresh personality. A poet who cannot do this knows little of the secret of freedom.

It is sometimes asked whether in recent years there has been any dominating figure in our poetry. The answer is not easy. It must be remembered that with very rare exceptions the great poets of an epoch are not generally known to have been such until after their own time, or at least until they have reached a venerable age. No one knew in 1820 of the ascendency that was coming to the names of Keats and Shelley, and it was only when Tennyson and Browning had survived their own generation that they were acknowledged as the masters that they were. So that speculation in this matter as to our own time is unprofitable. While he was alive every British poet acknowledged Thomas Hardy to be his master, but Thomas Hardy, although still inspired by an apparently inexhaustible poetic vitality, lived to be eighty-seven. There are one or two other poets included in this book who are also of a great age and of great achievement, but none of them can be said to make Thomas Hardy's challenge. Who, if any, of the younger men may yet come to be recognized as a giant among his fellows, we cannot foretell. It is enough to say that we believe that no poet here represented will be neglected when the critics of the future come to make their reckoning.

It may be observed that in my separate notices I seem to have a high regard for all the poets chosen. To which my answer is that this is why I chose them.

JOHN DRINKWATER

PART I

THOMAS HARDY (1840–1928)

At the turn of the new century Thomas Hardy was sixty years of age. Already he had established himself as one of the great British novelists, but it was not until the period of our selection that he became further known by the work that is likely also to place him among the great British poets. Although he had written poetry quite early in his career, he did not publish *Wessex Poems* until 1898; the book like *Poems of the Past and Present*, published four years later, contained many poems of a date before the novels were written. In 1904 came the first volume of *The Dynasts*, to be followed by two others, and since that date several collections of Thomas Hardy's later lyrics have been among the most decisive achievements of twentieth-century poetry. *The Dynasts* may well come to be reckoned the greatest long poem in English since Wordsworth's *Prelude*. Mr. Hardy's technique, while recognizing established verse forms, is full of personal variety, and delights in surmounting difficulties. The charge of pessimism sometimes brought against his verse, as against his work in general, seems to me to be a frivolous one. There is a stoical refusal of easy consolation, but an art so vigorous cannot but be exalting to right perception. *An Ancient to Ancients* is, I think, the most spirited challenge from old age in the language. When we remember the great series of novels, *The Dynasts*, and the very substantial lyric range covered by half-a-dozen stout volumes, we are induced to wonder whether, in the creation of a world completely and for ever his own, any British writer since Shakespeare is to be placed above him.

THE DARKLING THRUSH

I LEANT upon a coppice gate
  When Frost was spectre-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
  The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
  Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
  Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
  The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
  The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
  Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
  Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice arose among
  The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
  Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
  In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
  Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
  Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
  Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
  His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
  And I was unaware.

FRIENDS BEYOND

William Dewy, Tranter Reuben, Farmer Ledlow late
at plough,
Robert's kin, and John's, and Ned's,
And the Squire, and Lady Susan, lie in Mellstock
churchyard now!

"Gone," I call them, gone for good, that group of local
hearts and heads;
Yet at mothy curfew-tide,
And at midnight when the noon-heat breathes it back
from walls and leads

They've a way of whispering to me — fellow-wight who
yet abide —
In the muted, measured note
Of a ripple under archways, or a lone cave's stillicide:

"We have triumphed: this achievement turns the bane
to antidote,
Unsuccesses to success,
Many thought-worn eves and morrows to a morrow free
of thought.

"No more need we corn and clothing, feel of old ter-
restrial stress;
Chill detraction stirs no sigh;
Fear of death has even bygone us: death gave all that
we possess."

W. D.— "Ye mid burn the old base-viol that I set such
value by."
Squire — "You may hold the manse in fee,
You may wed my spouse, may let my children's
memory of me die."

Lady — "You may have my rich brocades, my laces; take each household key;
Ransack coffer, desk, bureau;
Quiz the few poor treasures hid there, con the letters kept by me."

Far.— "Ye mid zell my favourite heifer, ye mid let the charlock grow,
Foul the grinterns, give up thrift."
Wife — "If ye break my best blue china, children, I shan't care or ho."

All — "We've no wish to hear the tidings, how the people's fortunes shift;
What your daily doings are;
Who are wedded, born, divided; if your lives beat slow or swift.

"Curious not the least are we if our intents you make or mar,
If you quire to our old tune,
If the City stage still passes, if the weirs still roar afar."

— Thus, with very gods' composure, freed those crosses late and soon
Which in life, the Trine allow
(Why, none witteth), and ignoring all that haps beneath the moon,

William Dewy, Tranter Reuben, Farmer Ledlow late at plough,
Robin's kin, and John's, and Ned's,
And the Squire, and Lady Susan, murmur mildly to me now.

THE OXEN

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.
"Now they are all on their knees,"
An elder said as we sat in a flock
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where
They dwelt in their strawy pen,
Nor did it occur to one of us there
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave
In these years! Yet, I feel,
If someone said on Christmas Eve,
"Come; see the oxen kneel

"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb
Our childhood used to know,"
I should go with him in the gloom,
Hoping it might be so.

HUSSAR'S SONG

From *The Dynasts*

When we lay where Budmouth Beach is,
O the girls were fresh as peaches
With their tall and tossing figures and their eyes of blue and brown!
And our hearts would ache with longing
As we paced from our sing-songing
With a smart *Clink! Clink!* up the Esplanade and down.

They distracted and delayed us
By the pleasant pranks they played us,
And what marvel, then, if troopers, even of regiments of renown,

On whom flashed those eyes divine, O,
Should forget the countersign, O,
As we tore *Clink! Clink!* back to camp above the town.

Do they miss us much, I wonder,
Now that war has swept us sunder,
And we roam from where the faces smile to where the faces frown?
And no more behold the features
Of the fair fantastic creatures,
And no more *Clink! Clink!* past the parlours of the town?

Shall we once again there meet them?
Falter fond attempts to greet them?
Will the gay sling-jacket glow again beside the muslin gown? —
Will they archly quiz and con us
With a sideway glance upon us,
While our spurs *Clink! Clink!* up the Esplanade and down?

"WHEN I SET OUT FOR LYONNESSE"

When I set out for Lyonnesse,
A hundred miles away,
The rime was on the spray,
And starlight lit my lonesomeness
When I set out for Lyonnesse
A hundred miles away.

What would bechance at Lyonnesse
While I should sojourn there
No prophet durst declare,
Not did the wisest wizard guess
What would bechance at Lyonnesse
While I should sojourn there.

When I came back from Lyonnesse
With magic in my eyes,
All marked with mute surmise
My radiance rare and fathomless,
When I came back from Lyonnesse
With magic in my eyes!

AN ANCIENT TO ANCIENTS

WHERE once we danced, where once we sang,
Gentlemen,
The floors are sunken, cobwebs hang,
And cracks creep; worms have fed upon
The doors. Yea, sprightlier times were then
Than now, with harps and tabrets gone,
Gentlemen!

Where once we rowed, where once we sailed,
Gentlemen,
And damsels took the tiller, veiled
Against too strong a stare (God wot
Their fancy, then or anywhen!)
Upon that shore we are clean forgot,
Gentlemen!

We have lost somewhat, afar and near,
Gentlemen,
The thinning of our ranks each year
Affords a hint we are nigh undone,
That we shall not be ever again
The marked of many, loved of one,
Gentlemen.

In dance the polka hit our wish,
Gentlemen,
The paced quadrille, the spry schottische,
"Sir Roger." — And in opera spheres

The "Girl" (the famed "Bohemian"),
And "Trovatore," held the ears,
Gentlemen.

This season's paintings do not please,
Gentlemen,
Like Etty, Mulready, Maclise;
Throbbing romance has waned and wanned,
No wizard wields the witching pen
Of Bulwer, Scott, Dumas, and Sand,
Gentlemen.

The bower we shrined to Tennyson,
Gentlemen,
Is roof-wrecked; damps there drip upon
Sagged seats, the creeper-nails are rust,
The spider is sole denizen;
Even she who voiced those rhymes is dust,
Gentlemen!

We who met sunrise sanguine-souled,
Gentlemen,
Are wearing weary. We are old;
These younger press; we feel our rout
Is imminent to Aïdes' den,—
That evening's shades are stretching out,
Gentlemen!

And yet, though ours be failing frames,
Gentlemen,
So were some others' history names,
Who trod their track light-limbed and fast
As these youth, and not alien
From enterprise, to their long last,
Gentlemen.

Sophocles, Plato, Socrates,
Gentlemen,

Pythagoras, Thucydides,
Herodotus, and Homer,— yea,
Clement, Augustin, Origen,
Burnt brightlier towards their setting-day,
Gentlemen.

And ye, red-lipped and smooth-browed; list
Gentlemen;
Much is there waits you we have missed;
Much lore we leave you worth the knowing,
Much, much has lain outside our ken:
Nay, rush not: time serves: we are going,
Gentlemen.

MARY ELIZABETH COLERIDGE
(1861–1907)

Although most of her poetry was written before 1900, it is so satisfying an example of a quiet and orderly tradition surviving with all its freshness into a new generation that we have chosen Mary Coleridge as one of the poets easily connecting our chosen period with the preceding years. She came of the famous Coleridge family, being a great grand-niece of its greatest member. Her verse, with its lovely polish and profound but unruffled temper, aims at no modernity, but is in no danger of being outmoded.

OUR LADY

Mother of God! no lady thou:
Common woman of common earth!
Our Lady ladies call thee now,
But Christ was never of gentle birth;
A common man of the common earth.

For God's ways are not as our ways.
The noblest lady in the land
Would have given up half her days,
Would have cut off her right hand,
To bear the Child that was God of the land.

Never a lady did He choose,
Only a maid of low degree,
So humble she might not refuse
The carpenter of Galilee.
A daughter of the people, she.

Out she sang the song of her heart.
Never a lady so had sung.
She knew no letters, had no art;
To all mankind, in woman's tongue,
Hath Israelitish Mary sung.

And still for men to come she sings,
Nor shall her singing pass away.
"*He hath filled the hungry with good things*" —
Oh, listen, lords and ladies gay! —
"*And the rich He hath sent empty away.*"

I SAW A STABLE, LOW AND VERY BARE

I saw a stable, low and very bare,
A little child in a manger.
The oxen knew Him, had Him in their care,
To men He was a stranger.
The safety of the world was lying there,
And the world's danger.

WHERE A ROMAN VILLA STOOD, ABOVE FREIBURG

On alien ground, breathing an alien air,
A Roman stood, far from his ancient home,

And gazing, murmured, "Ah, the hills are fair,
But not the hills of Rome!"

Descendant of a race to Romans kin,
Where the old son of Empire stood, I stand.
The self-same rocks fold the same valley in,
Untouched of human hand.

Over another shines the self-same star,
Another heart with nameless longing fills,
Crying aloud, "How beautiful they are,
But not our English hills!"

THE WHITE WOMEN [1]

WHERE dwell the lovely, wild white women folk,
Mortal to man?
They never bowed their necks beneath the yoke,
They dwelt alone when the first morning broke
And Time began.

Taller are they than man, and very fair,
Their cheeks are pale,
At sight of them the tiger in his lair,
The falcon hanging in the azure air,
The eagles quail.

The deadly shafts their nervous hands let fly
Are stronger than our strongest — in their form
Larger, more beauteous, carved amazingly,
And when they fight, the wild white women cry
The war-cry of the storm.

Their words are not as ours. If man might go
Among the waves of Ocean when they break

[1] From a legend of Malay, told by Hugh Clifford.

And hear them — hear the language of the snow
Falling on torrents — he might also know
The tongue they speak.

Pure are they as the light; they never sinned,
But when the rays of the eternal fire
Kindle the West, their tresses they unbind
And fling their girdles to the Western wind,
Swept by desire.

Lo, maidens to the maidens then are born,
Strong children of the maidens and the breeze,
Dreams are not — in the glory of the morn,
Seen through the gates of ivory and horn —
More fair than these.

And none may find their dwelling. In the shade
Primeval of the forest oaks they hide.
One of our race, lost in an awful glade,
Saw with his human eyes a wild white maid,
And gazing died.

ROBERT BRIDGES (b. 1844)

At the age of eighty-four, Dr. Bridges holds a greatly honoured position in British poetry. His experiments in classical metres, his interest in spelling reform, and his active association with the Society for Pure English, have also won him the respect of scholarship, but they may have a little obscured from a wider public the enchanting freshness and poignancy of his lyrical genius. He has also written many masques and dramas in verse. In 1913, he was appointed Poet Laureate, and if he has not been voluble in the dignity, he has done nothing unworthy of an office that is sometimes ridiculed by people who forget that it has been held by Ben Jonson, Words-

worth, and Tennyson. But probably they do not forget it; those names, no doubt, mean nothing to them. Dr. Bridges is one of the most accomplished technicians in verse of this or any other age, but the bloom of his exquisitely fashioned lyrics is never spoiled by pedantry.

I WILL NOT LET THEE GO

I WILL not let thee go.
Ends all our month-long song in this?
Can it be summed up so,
Quit in a single kiss?
I will not let thee go.

I will not let thee go.
If thy words' breath could scare thy deeds,
As the soft south can blow
And toss the feathered seeds,
Then I might let thee go.

I will not let thee go.
Had not the great sun seen, I might;
Or were he reckoned slow
To bring the false to light,
Then might I let thee go.

I will not let thee go.
The stars that crowd the summer skies
Have watched us so below
With all their million eyes,
I dare not let thee go.

I will not let thee go.
Have we not chid the changeful moon,
Now rising late, and now
Because she set too soon,
And shall I let thee go?

I will not let thee go.
Have not the young flowers been content,
Plucked ere their buds could blow,
To seal our sacrament?
I cannot let thee go.

I will not let thee go.
I hold thee by too many hands:
Thou sayest farewell, and lo!
I have thee by the hands,
And will not let thee go.

DEJECTION

Wherefore to-night so full of care,
My soul, revolving hopeless strife,
Pointing at hindrance, and the bare
Painful escapes of fitful life?

Shaping the doom that may befall
By precedent of terror past:
By love dishonoured, and the call
Of friendship slighted at the last?

By treasured names, the little store
That memory out of wreck could save
Of loving hearts, that gone before
Call their old comrade to the grave?

O soul be patient: thou shalt find
A little matter mend all this;
Some strain of music to thy mind,
Some praise for skill not spent amiss.

Again shall pleasure overflow
Thy cup with sweetness, thou shalt taste
Nothing but sweetness, and shalt grow
Half sad for sweetness run to waste.

O happy life! I hear thee sing,
O rare delight of mortal stuff!
I praise my days for all they bring,
Yet are they only not enough.

THE WINDMILL

The green corn waving in the dale,
The ripe grass waving on the hill:
I lean across the paddock pale
And gaze upon the giddy mill.

Its hurtling sails a mighty sweep
Cut thro' the air: with rushing sound
Each strikes in fury down the steep,
Rattles, and whirls in chase around.

Beside his sacks the miller stands
On high within the open door:
A book and pencil in his hands,
His grist and meal he reckoneth o'er.

His tireless merry slave the wind
Is busy with his work to-day:
From whencesoe'er he comes to grind;
He hath a will and knows the way.

He gives the creaking sails a spin,
The circling millstones faster flee,
The shuddering timbers groan within,
And down the shoots the meal runs free.

The miller giveth him no thanks,
And doth not much his work o'erlook:
He stands beside the sacks, and ranks
The figures in his dusty book.

SO SWEET LOVE SEEMED THAT APRIL MORN

So sweet love seemed that April morn,
When first we kissed beside the thorn,
So strangely sweet, it was not strange
We thought that love could never change.

But I can tell — let truth be told —
That love will change in growing old;
Though day by day is nought to see,
So delicate his motions be.

And in the end 'twill come to pass
Quite to forget what once he was,
Nor even in fancy to recall
The pleasure that was all in all.

His little spring, that sweet we found,
So deep in summer floods is drowned,
I wonder, bathed in joy complete,
How love so young could be so sweet.

FRANCIS JOSEPH THOMPSON (1857–1907)

Thompson's life, touching tragedy at many points, became a romance under the devoted care of his friends, Alice and Wilfred Meynell. Having endured the miseries of poverty and opium, he was nursed into peace and creative activity for a number of years, until he fell a victim to consumption at the age of fifty. His poetry does not strictly belong to our period, but it is so signally representative of the modern temper with a religious application, that it has seemed proper to include his masterpiece, *The Hound of Heaven*, in the present collection as an example of the present age's treatment of "this high argument." The luxuriousness of his verse

has provoked some critics, but it will survive their censure. Many of his shorter poems, especially those on childhood, are of a deep and poignant beauty.

THE HOUND OF HEAVEN

I FLED Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes, I sped;
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat — and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet —
"All things betray thee, who betrayest Me."

I pleaded, outlaw-wise,
By many a hearted casement, curtained red,
Trellised with intertwining charities;
(For, though I knew His love who followèd,
Yet was I sore adread
Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside);
But, if one little casement parted wide,
The gust of His approach would clash it to.
Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to pursue.
Across the margent of the world I fled,
And troubled the gold gateways of the stars,
Smiting for shelter on their clangèd bars;
Fretted to dulcet jars
And silvern chatter the pale ports o' the moon.
I said to dawn, Be sudden; to eve, Be soon;

With thy young skiey blossoms heap me over
From this tremendous Lover!
Float thy vague veil about me, lest He see!
I tempted all His servitors, but to find
My own betrayal in their constancy,
In faith to Him their fickleness to me,
Their traitorous trueness, and their loyal deceit.
To all swift things for swiftness did I sue;
Clung to the whistling mane of every wind.
But whether they swept, smoothly fleet,
The long savannahs of the blue;
Or whether, Thunder-driven,
They clanged His chariot 'thwart a heaven
Plashy with flying lightnings round the spurn o' their feet: —
Fear wist not to evade as Love wist to pursue.
Still with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
Came on the following Feet,
And a Voice above their beat —
"Naught shelters thee, who wilt not shelter Me."

I sought no more that after which I strayed
In face of man or maid;
But still within the little children's eyes
Seems something, something that replies;
They at least are for me, surely for me!
I turned me to them very wistfully;
But, just as their young eyes grew sudden fair
With dawning answers there,
Their angel plucked them from me by the hair.
"Come then, ye other children, Nature's — share
With me" (said I) "your delicate fellowship;
Let me greet you lip to lip,
Let me twine you with caresses,
Wantoning

With our Lady-Mother's vagrant tresses,
Banqueting
With her in her wind-walled palace,
Underneath her azured dais,
Quaffing, as your taintless way is,
From a chalice
Lucent-weeping out of the dayspring."
So it was done:
I in their delicate fellowship was one —
Drew the bolt of Nature's secrecies.
I knew all the swift importings
On the wilful face of skies;
I knew how the clouds arise
Spumèd of the wild sea-snortings;
All that's born or dies
Rose and drooped with — made them shapers
Of mine own moods, or wailful or divine —
With them joyed and was bereaven.
I was heavy with the even,
When she lit her glimmering tapers
Round the day's dead sanctities.
I laughed in the morning's eyes.
I triumphed and I saddened with all weather,
Heaven and I wept together,
And its sweet tears were salt with mortal mine;
Against the red throb of its sunset-heart
I laid my own to beat,
And share commingling heat;
But not by that, by that, was eased my human smart.
In vain my tears were wet on Heaven's gray cheek.
For ah! we know not what each other says,
These things and I; in sound *I* speak —
Their sound is but their stir, they speak by silences.
Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my drouth;
Let her, if she would own me,
Drop yon blue bosom-veil of sky, and show me
The breasts o' her tenderness:

Never did any milk of hers once bless
My thirsting mouth.
Nigh and nigh draws the chase,
With unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy;
And past those noisèd Feet
A voice comes yet more fleet —
"Lo! naught contents thee, who content'st not Me."

Naked I wait Thy love's uplifted stroke!
My harness piece by piece Thou hast hewn from me,
And smitten me to my knee;
I am defenceless utterly.
I slept, methinks, and woke,
And, slowly gazing, find me stripped in sleep.
In the rash lustihead of my young powers,
I shook the pillaring hours
And pulled my life upon me; grimed with smears,
I stand amid the dust o' the mounded years —
My mangled youth lies dead beneath the heap.
My days have crackled and gone up in smoke,
Have puffed and burst as sun-starts on a stream.
Yea, faileth now even dream
The dreamer, and the lute the lutanist;
Even the linkèd fantasies, in whose blossomy twist
I swung the earth a trinket at my wrist,
Are yielding; cords of all too weak account
For earth with heavy griefs so overplussed.
Ah! is Thy love indeed
A weed, albeit an amaranthine weed,
Suffering no flowers except itself to mount?
Ah! must —
Designer infinite! —
Ah! must Thou char the wood ere Thou canst limn with it?
My freshness spent its wavering shower i' the dust;
And now my heart is as a broken fount,

Wherein tear-drippings stagnate, spilt down ever
From the dank thoughts that shiver
Upon the sighful branches of my mind.
Such is; what is to be?
The pulp so bitter, how shall taste the rind?
I dimly guess what Time in mists confounds;
Yet ever and anon a trumpet sounds
From the hid battlements of Eternity;
Those shaken mists a space unsettle, then
Round the half-glimpsèd turrets slowly wash again.
But not ere him who summoneth
I first have seen, enwound
With glooming robes purpureal, cypress-crowned;
His name I know, and what his trumpet saith.
Whether man's heart or life it be which yields
Thee harvest, must Thy harvest fields
Be dunged with rotten death?

Now of that long pursuit
Comes on at hand the bruit;
That Voice is round me like a bursting sea.
"And is thy earth so marred,
Shattered in shard on shard?
Lo, all things fly thee, for thou fliest Me!
Strange, piteous, futile thing,
Wherefore should any set thee love apart?
Seeing none but I makes much of naught"
(He said),
"And human love needs human meriting:
How hast thou merited —
Of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?
Alack, thou knowest not
How little worthy of any love thou art!
Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee
Save Me, save only Me?
All which I took from thee I did but take,
Not for thy harms,

But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.
All which thy child's mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp My hand, and come!"

Halts by me that footfall:
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?
"Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He Whom thou seekest!
Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me."

THE AFTER WOMAN

Daughter of the ancient Eve,
We know the gifts ye gave — and give.
Who knows the gifts which *you* shall give,
Daughter of the newer Eve?
You, if my soul be augur, you
Shall — O what shall you not, Sweet, do?
The celestial traitress play,
And all mankind to bliss betray;
With sacrosanct cajoleries
And starry treachery of your eyes,
Tempt us back to Paradise!
Make heavenly trespass; — ay, press in
Where faint the fledge-foot seraphin,
Blest fool! Be ensign of your wars,
And shame us all to warriors!
Unbanner your bright locks — advance,
Girl, their gilded puissance,
I' the mystic vaward, and draw on
After the lovely gonfalon
Us to out-folly the excess
Of your sweet foolhardiness;
To adventure like intense
Assault against Omnipotence!

Give me song, as She is, new,
Earth should turn in time thereto!
New, and new, and thrice so new,
All old sweets, New Sweet, meant you!
Fair, I had a dream of thee,
When my young heart beat prophecy,
And in apparition elate
Thy little breasts knew waxèd great,
Sister of the Canticle,
And thee for God grown marriageable.

How my desire desired your day,
That, wheeled in rumour on its way,
Shook me thus with presentience! Then
Eden's lopped tree shall shoot again:
For who Christ's eyes shall miss, with those
Eyes for evident nuncios?
Or who be tardy to His call
In your accents augural?
Who shall not feel the Heavens hid
Impend, at tremble of your lid,
And divine advent shine avowed
Under that dim and lucid cloud;
Yea, 'fore the silver apocalypse,
Fail, at the unsealing of your lips?
When to love *you* is (O Christ's Spouse!)
To love the beauty of His house;
Then come the Isaian days; the old
Shall dream; and our young men behold
Vision — yea, the vision of Thabor-mount,
Which none to other shall recount,
Because in all men's hearts shall be
The seeing and the prophecy.
For ended is the Mystery Play,
When Christ is life, and you the way;
When Egypt's spoils are Israel's right,
And Day fulfils the married arms of Night.

But here my lips are still.
Until
You and the hour shall be revealed,
This song is sung and sung not, and its words are sealed.

NOCTURN

I WALK, I only,
Not I only wake;
Nothing is, this sweet night,
But doth couch and wake
For its love's sake;
Everything, this sweet night,
Couches with its mate.
For whom but for the stealthy-visitant sun
Is the naked moon
Tremulous and elate?
The heaven hath the earth
Its own and all apart;
The hushèd pool holdeth
A star to its heart.
You may think the rose sleepeth,
But though she folded is,
The wind doubts her sleeping;
Not all the rose sleeps,
But smiles in her sweet heart
For crafty bliss.
The wind lieth with the rose,
And the rose her kiss.
Ah, mouth of me!
Is it then that this
Seemeth much to thee? —
I wander only.
The rose hath her kiss.

ALICE MEYNELL (1850–1922)

The volume containing Alice Meynell's Collected Poems amounts to little more than a hundred pages, and yet her reputation is secure. Like Landor, she is likely to survive not by popular consent, but by the elect judgment of successive ages. In her small testament of poetry there is hardly a line of waste tissue, hardly one that is not lovingly wrought into a simple and abiding perfection. Underneath the aristocratic calm of this verse, is an emotional power that is apt to escape the casual reader. An active life of domestic cares and humours did not forbid a long and serene dedication to poetry, and of no poet's art might it be more truly said it "nothing common did, or mean." Much of her best work was done after 1900. Her essays employ a prose that is no less exactly modulated than her verse.

THE SHEPHERDESS

She walks — the lady of my delight —
A shepherdess of sheep.
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white;
She guards them from the steep;
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright,
Dark valleys safe and deep.
Into that tender breast at night
The chastest stars may peep.
She walks — the lady of my delight —
A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right;

She has her soul to keep.
She walks — the lady of my delight —
A shepherdess of sheep.

TO THE BELOVED

Oh, not more subtly silence strays
Amongst the winds, between the voices,
Mingling alike with pensive lays,
And with the music that rejoices,
Than thou art present in my days.

My silence, life returns to thee
In all the pauses of her breath.
Hush back to rest the melody
That out of thee awakeneth;
And thou, wake ever, wake for me!

Thou art like silence all unvexed,
Though wild words part my soul from thee.
Thou art like silence unperplexed,
A secret and a mystery
Between one footfall and the next.

Most dear pause in a mellow lay!
Thou art inwoven with every air.
With thee the wildest tempests play,
And snatches of thee everywhere
Make little heavens throughout a day.

Darkness and solitude shine, for me.
For life's fair outward part are rife
The silver noises; let them be.
It is the very soul of life
Listens for thee, listens for thee.

O pause between the sobs of cares;
O thought within all thought that is;

Trance between laughters unawares:
  Thou are the shape of melodies,
And thou the ecstasy of prayers!

CRADLE-SONG AT TWILIGHT

The child not yet is lulled to rest.
  Too young a nurse, the slender Night
So laxly holds him to her breast
  That throbs with flight.

He plays with her, and will not sleep.
  For other playfellows she sighs;
An unmaternal fondness keep
  Her alien eyes.

THE LADY POVERTY

The Lady Poverty was fair:
But she has lost her looks of late,
With change of times and change of air.
Ah slattern! she neglects her hair,
Her gown, her shoes; she keeps no state
As once when her pure feet were bare.

Or — almost worse, if worse can be —
She scolds in parlours, dusts and trims,
Watches and counts. Oh, is this she
Whom Francis met, whose step was free,
Who with Obedience carolled hymns,
In Umbria walked with Chastity?

Where is her ladyhood? Not here,
Not among modern kinds of men;
But in the stony fields, where clear
Through the thin trees the skies appear,
In delicate spare soil and fen,
And slender landscape and austere.

A SONG OF DERIVATIONS

I come from nothing; but from where
Come the undying thoughts I bear?
  Down, through long links of death and birth,
  From the past poets of the earth.
My immortality is there.

I am like the blossom of an hour.
But long, long vanished sun and shower
  Awoke my breath i' the young world's air.
  I track the past back everywhere
Through seed and flower and seed and flower.

Or I am like a stream that flows
Full of the cold springs that arose
  In morning lands, in distant hills;
  And down the plain my channel fills
With melting of forgotten snows.

Voices, I have not heard, possessed
My own fresh songs; my thoughts are blessed
  With relics of the far unknown.
  And mixed with memories not my own
The sweet streams throng into my breast.

Before this life began to be,
The happy songs that wake in me
  Woke long ago and far apart.
  Heavily on this little heart
Presses this immortality.

THE VOICE OF A BIRD

"He shall rise up at the voice of a bird"
Ecclesiastes

Who then is "he"?
Dante, Keats, Shakespeare, Milton, Shelley; all

Rose in their greatness at the shrill decree,
The little rousing inarticulate call.

For they stood up
At the bird-voice, of lark, of nightingale,
Drank poems from that throat as from a cup.
Over the great world's notes did these prevail.

And not alone
The signal poets woke. In listening man,
Woman, and child a poet stirs unknown,
Throughout the Mays of birds since Mays began.

He rose, he heard —
Our father, our St. Peter, in his tears —
The crowing, twice, of the prophetic bird,
The saddest cock-crow of our human years.

EDMUND WILLIAM GOSSE (1849–1928)

Sir Edmund Gosse is, by the activities of recent years, so widely known as a critical essayist, that his readers may sometimes forget how good a poet he is. Though he began to write verse far back in the nineteenth century, he seemed to be an admirable choice for our present purpose as representing the indestructible vitality of simple tradition. Sir Edmund has never been much disturbed by theories about poetry; he has merely written it. And the verse produced by him in 1910 or so bears easy company with that of his youth in 1870. His literary *causeries* have long been the delight of a large and discerning public, and his autobiographical study, *Father and Son*, has become a classic in his own lifetime. But when the final reckoning comes to be made by later critics, it will be found that the best of his poetry will add greatly to the distinction of a rich and varied achievement.

Since this note was written, Sir Edmund Gosse's distinguished career has come to an end at the age of seventy-eight.

WITH A COPY OF HERRICK

Fresh with all airs of woodland brooks
  And scents of showers,
Take to your haunt of holy books
  This saint of flowers.

When meadows burn with budding May,
  And heaven is blue,
Before his shrine our prayers we say,—
  Saint Robin true.

Love crowned with thorns is on his staff,—
  Thorns of sweet-briar;
His benediction is a laugh,
  Birds are his choir.

His sacred robe of white and red
  Unction distils;
He hath a nimbus round his head
  Of daffodils.

CHLOË IS FALSE

Chloë is false, but the fire in her eyes
Rouses her lovers with thousand sweet delusions;
  Cælia is true, and, too true to be wise,
Breaks, like a dream, all their amorous illusions.

Lovers are weak, and they ask not to know
All that lies under the rose-leaves and the laughter;
  Wisdom may call, but to pleasure they go,
Cælia they honour, but Chloë they run after.

THE SUPPLIANT

Beneath the poplars o'er the sacred pool
The halcyons dart like rays of azure light,—
Fair presage! by the columns white and cool,
I'll watch till fall of night.

Perchance the goddess at the twilight's breath
Will come with silver feet and braidless hair,
And all too startled to decree my death,
Will hearken to my prayer.

So when at moonrise by the farm I go,
The lovely girl who near the fig-tree stands,
May turn no more on scornful feet and slow,
But hold out both her hands.

REVELATION

Into the silver night
She brought with her pale hand
The topaz lanthorn-light,
And darted splendour o'er the land;
Around her in a band,
Ringstrak'd and pied, the great soft moths came flying,
And, flapping with their mad wings, fanned
The flickering flame, ascending, falling, dying.

Behind the thorny pink
Close wall of blossom'd may,
I gaz'd thro' one green chink,
And saw no more than thousands may,—
Saw sweetness, tender and gay,—
Saw full rose lips as rounded as the cherry,
Saw braided locks more dark than bay,
And flashing eyes, decorous, pure and merry.

With food for furry friends,
She passed, her lamp and she,
Till eaves and gable-ends
Hid all that saffron sheen from me:
Around my rosy tree
Once more the silver-starry night was shining,
With depths of heaven, dewy and free,
And crystals of a carven moon declining.

Alas! for him who dwells
In frigid air of thought,
When warmer light dispels
The frozen calm his spirit sought;
By life too lately taught
He sees the ecstatic Human from him stealing;
Reels from the joy experience brought,
And dares not clutch what Love was half revealing.

THE VANISHING BOAT

(*Henry Sidgwick*)

He is dying,—
He is dying in England in the clammy heat,
And, in the quiet room where he is lying,
The coverlet is white from head to feet,
Like this white fjord beneath this milky sky.
I sit, and almost see him die.
Here where the tender evening-breeze is sighing
Along the beech-wood coverts, sigh on sigh,
Where all the lingering airs are cool and sweet
With woodruff and the soft, crush'd juniper,
And scarce a bough can stir,
It is so still here in the fading day;
And there, in England, miles and miles away,
He is dying.

All messages come slowly
To this pure haunt of sylvan loneliness;
Perchance even now he hath put off the stress
Of life, and its extremest weariness,
For rest more calm and holy.
I know not if the face I seem to see
Upon the long white visionary bed
Be living still, or hath been some time dead;
For it is shrouded wholly,
As by the mist that lifts from off the sea,
As by the wood-smoke drifting in the wood.
I know not if I greet my friend
Still here, but sinking to an end;
Or gaze across the interlude
Of a cold beginning mystery;
Or see before me lying stiff and frore
The statue that he is no more.

Howe'er it be, farewell!
Farewell, from shining fjord and pine-clad fell,
From odorous brae and unfamiliar shore,—
Now I shall see that sacred face no more;
No longer from those mild, transfigured eyes
See flash the gracious miracle
Of sympathetic thoughts and sage replies,—
Those eyes that were the store
Of kindness unreproving, keen and wise.

Farewell, farewell!
The darkness gathers round me in the bell
Of cowslip-coloured air;
And the long coast beyond grows pale and faint.
A little vanishing boat returning thither
Sends silver streamers in her wake,
Altho' her oars scarce break
The lucent mirror of the lake.
She passes into silence and dim light,

She fades into the cowslip-coloured night,—
She passes, — whither?

I know not. But I know
From me the silent occupant must go;
Whatever message to this shore he brought,
Whatever comforting of heart's annoy,
Whatever cargo of clear thought,
Whatever freight of hope and joy,—
His hour is over and his mission done.
Thanks for the long day's happy work he wrought,
Thanks for his cheerful toil beneath the sun,
Thanks for the victories he won.
Now, late at evening, with a silver thread
Of loving memories in his wake, he goes.

Perchance the distance brings him what he sought,
Perchance the further shore, where he is fled,
Is mirage to the dead.
Who knows, who knows?

To all at length an end!
All sailors to some unseen harbour float.
Farewell, mysterious, happy, twilight boat.
Farewell, my friend!

RUDYARD KIPLING (b. 1865)

It is perhaps within the truth to say that of all the considerable writers of this age, Mr. Kipling is the most popular. His short stories and his books for children have an almost universal public, and his poetry is hardly less widely known. If posterity should a little clip this credit, his reputation will still be left with an ample balance. It would be difficult to over-rate the level excellence of his prose, but his poetry is a more variable

and disputable matter. Of the immediate effect of its metrical attack there can be no question, and whatever the essential quality of a piece like *When Earth's Last Picture is Painted* may be, it stays familiarly in the memory with a fresh and lasting appeal. And a great number of Mr. Kipling's poems assert themselves in this way. He may seem, however, to some readers to be a little too often and too securely on the side of the big battalions to be altogether good for poetry. The greatest poets may at moments bring the trumpet and the drum into their verse, but it is a dangerous habit. But this is no more than to say that to some of us Mr. Kipling's patriotic strain is the least profitable quality of his verse, not because we are not patriots, but because we do not take our patriotism that way. It is a matter of mood. There remains in his poetry much to admire, and we gratefully allow that in his own striking method Mr. Kipling is incomparable. None of his many imitators have approached his secret.

SUSSEX

1902

God gave all men all earth to love,
But since our hearts are small,
Ordained for each one spot should prove
Belovèd over all;
That, as He watched Creation's birth,
So we, in godlike mood,
May of our love create our earth
And see that it is good.

So one shall Baltic pines content,
As one some Surrey glade,
Or one the palm-grove's droned lament
Before Levuka's Trade.

Each to his choice, and I rejoice
The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground — in a fair ground —
Yea, Sussex by the sea!

No tender-hearted garden crowns,
No bosomed woods adorn
Our blunt, bow-headed, whale-backed Downs,
But gnarled and writhen thorn —
Bare slopes where chasing shadows skim,
And, through the gaps revealed,
Belt upon belt, the wooded, dim,
Blue goodness of the Weald.

Clean of officious fence or hedge,
Half-wild and wholly tame,
The wise turf cloaks the white cliff edge
As when the Romans came.
What sign of those that fought and died
At shift of sword and sword?
The barrow and the camp abide,
The sunlight and the sward.

Here leaps ashore the full Sou'west
All heavy-winged with brine,
Here lies above the folded crest
The Channel's leaden line;
And here the sea-fogs lap and cling,
And here, each warning each,
The sheep-bells and the ship-bells ring
Along the hidden beach.

We have no waters to delight
Our broad and brookless vales —
Only the dewpond on the height
Unfed, that never fails —

Whereby no tattered herbage tells
  Which way the season flies —
Only our close-bit thyme that smells
  Like dawn of Paradise.

Here through the strong and shadeless days
  The tinkling silence thrills;
Or little, lost, Down churches praise
  The Lord who made the hills:
But here the Old Gods guard their round,
  And, in her secret heart,
The heathen kingdom Wilfred found
  Dreams, as she dwells, apart.

Though all the rest were all my share,
  With equal soul I'd see
Her nine-and-thirty sisters fair,
  Yet none more fair than she.
Choose ye your need from Thames to Tweed,
  And I will choose instead
Such lands as lie 'twixt Rake and Rye,
  Black Down and Beachy Head.

I will go out against the sun
  Where the rolled scarp retires,
And the Long Man of Wilmington
  Looks naked toward the shires;
And east till doubling Rother crawls
  To find the fickle tide,
By dry and sea-forgotten walls,
  Our ports of stranded pride.

I will go north about the shaws
  And the deep ghylls that breed
Huge oaks and old, the which we hold
  No more than Sussex weed;

Or south where windy Piddinghoe's
  Begilded dolphin veers
And red beside wide-bankèd Ouse
  Lie down our Sussex steers.

So to the land our hearts we give
  Till the sure magic strike,
And Memory, Use, and Love make live
  Us and our fields alike —
That deeper than our speech and thought,
  Beyond our reason's sway,
Clay of the pit whence we were wrought
  Yearns to its fellow-clay.

God gives all men all earth to love,
  But since man's heart is small,
Ordains for each one spot shall prove
  Belovèd over all.
Each to his choice, and I rejoice
  The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground — in a fair ground —
  Yea, Sussex by the sea!

WHEN EARTH'S LAST PICTURE IS PAINTED

1892

When Earth's last picture is painted, and the tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colours have faded, and the youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it — lie down for an æon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall put us to work anew.

And those that were good shall be happy: they shall sit
in a golden chair;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of
comets' hair.
They shall find real saints to draw from — Magdalene,
Peter and Paul;
They shall work for an age at a sitting and never be tired
at all!

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work
for fame,
But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his
separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things
as They are!

RECESSIONAL

1897

God of our fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;
The Captains and the Kings depart:
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away;
On dune and headland sinks the fire:

Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
  Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
  Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,
  Or lesser breeds without the Law —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
  In reeking tube and iron shard,
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
  And guarding, calls not Thee to guard,
For frantic boast and foolish word —
Thy mercy on Thy People, Lord!

MANDALAY

By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a-settin', and I know she thinks o' me;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, and the temple-bells they say:
"Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to Mandalay!"
  Come you back to Mandalay,
  Where the old Flotilla lay:
  Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon to Mandalay?
  On the road to Mandalay,
  Where the flyin'-fishes play,
  An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay!

'Er petticoat was yaller an' 'er little cap was green,
An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-lat — jes' the same as Thee-
baw's Queen,
An' I seed her first a-smokin' of a whackin' white
cheroot,
An' a-wastin' Christian kisses on an 'eathen idol's foot:
Bloomin' idol made o' mud —
Wot they called the Great Gawd Budd —
Plucky lot she cared for idols when I kissed 'er where
she stud!
On the road to Mandalay....

When the mist was on the rice-fields an' the sun was
droppin' slow,
She'd git 'er little banjo an' she'd sing "*Kulla-lo-lo!*"
With 'er arm upon my shoulder an' 'er cheek agin my
cheek
We useter watch the steamers an' the *hathis* pilin' teak.
Elephints a-pilin' teak
In the sludgy, squdgy creek,
Where the silence 'ung that 'eavy you was 'arf afraid
to speak!
On the road to Mandalay....

But that's all shove be'ind me — long ago an' fur away,
An' there ain't no busses runnin' from the Bank to
Mandalay;
An' I'm learnin' 'ere in London what the ten-year
soldier tells:
"If you've 'eard the East a-callin', you won't never 'eed
naught else."
No! you won't 'eed nothin' else
But them spicy garlic smells,
An' the sunshine an' the palm-trees an' the tinkly
temple-bells;
On the road to Mandalay....

I am sick o' wastin' leather on these gritty pavin'-stones,
An' the blasted Henglish drizzle wakes the fever in my bones;
Tho' I walks with fifty 'ousemaids outer Chelsea to the Strand,
An' they talks a lot o' lovin', but wot do they understand?
Beefy face an' grubby 'and —
Law! wot do they understand?
I've a neater, sweeter maiden in a cleaner, greener land!
On the road to Mandalay....

Ship me somewheres east of Suez, where the best is like the worst,
Where there are n't no Ten Commandments an' a man can raise a thirst;
For the temple-bells are callin', an' it's there that I would be —
By the old Moulmein Pagoda, looking lazy at the sea;
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the old Flotilla lay,
With our sick beneath the awnings when we went to Mandalay!
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay!

THE HOLY WAR

1917

"For here lay the excellent wisdom of him that built Mansoul, that the walls could never be broken down nor hurt by the most mighty adverse potentate unless the townsmen gave consent thereto." — Bunyan's *Holy War*.

A Tinker out of Bedford,
A vagrant oft in quod,

A private under Fairfax,
A minister of God —
Two hundred years and thirty
Ere Armageddon came
His single hand portrayed it,
And Bunyan was his name!

He mapped for those who follow,
The world in which we are —
"This famous town of Mansoul"
That takes the Holy War.
Her true and traitor people,
The gates along her wall,
From Eye Gate unto Feel Gate,
John Bunyan showed them all.

All enemy divisions,
Recruits of every class,
And highly-screened positions
For flame or poison-gas;
The craft that we call modern,
The crimes that we call new,
John Bunyan had 'em typed and filed
In Sixteen Eighty-two.

Likewise the Lords of Looseness
That hamper faith and works,
The Perseverance-Doubters,
And Present-Comfort shirks,
With brittle intellectuals
Who crack beneath a strain —
John Bunyan met that helpful set
In Charles the Second's reign.

Emmanuel's vanguard dying
For right and not for rights,
My Lord Apollyon lying
To the State-kept Stockholmites,

The Pope, the swithering Neutrals,
  The Kaiser and his Gott —
Their rôles, their goals, their naked souls —
  He knew and drew the lot.

Now he hath left his quarters,
  In Bunhill Fields to lie,
The wisdom that he taught us
  Is proven prophecy —
One watchword through our Armies,
  One answer from our Lands: —
"No dealings with Diabolus
  As long as Mansoul stands!"

A pedlar from a hovel,
  The lowest of the low,
The Father of the Novel,
  Salvation's first Defoe,
Eight blinded generations
  Ere Armageddon came,
He showed us how to meet it,
  And Bunyan was his name!

WILLIAM WATSON (b. 1858)

Sir William Watson had written much of his best poetry before 1900, but from time to time he has added to it since then. His is a full-voiced, stately verse, of a character that may momentarily be out of fashion, but scarcely out of discriminating favour. His occasional protests against a manner more recent than his own, perhaps overlook merit that is obscured by much intemperance, but his poetry sufficiently vindicates his preferences in so far as they affect his own practice. Whether or not other poets do well to write differently makes, as they say, no matter, but that he has chosen the right and inevitable way for himself is clear from

the evidence of his restrained yet eloquent art. Every method has its own dangers, and in Sir William Watson's poetry we may now and again feel that the voice is a tone or so too ceremonial for the occasion. But when the tone and the occasion fit, as they so often do, the result shows that the grand manner is not wholly prerogative of a past age.

SHELLEY'S CENTENARY

Within a narrow span of time,
Three princes of the realm of rhyme,
At height of youth or manhood's prime
  From earth took wing,
To join the fellowship sublime
  Who, dead, yet sing.

He, first, his earliest wreath who wove
Of laurel grown in Latmian grove,
Conquered by pain and hapless love
  Found calmer home,
Roofed by the heaven that glows above
  Eternal Rome.

A fierier soul, its own fierce prey,
And cumbered more with mortal clay,
At Missolonghi flamed away,
  And left the air
Reverberating to this day
  Its loud despair.

Alike remote from Byron's scorn
And Keats's magic as of morn
Bursting for ever newly-born
  On forests old,
To wake a hoary world forlorn
  With touch of gold,

Shelley, the cloud-begot, who grew
Nourished on starbeams, air, and dew,
Into that Essence whence he drew
His life and lyre,
Was fittingly resolved anew
Through wave and fire.

And it was strangely, wildly meet,
That he, who brooked not Time's slow feet,
With passage thus abrupt and fleet
Should hurry hence,
Eager the Great Perhaps to greet
With Why? and Whence?

Impatient of the world's fixed way,
He ne'er could suffer God's delay,
But all the future in a day
Would build divine,
And the whole past in ruins lay,
An emptied shrine.

Vain vision! but the glow, the fire,
The passion of benign desire,
These peradventure lift him higher
Than many a soul
That mounts a million paces nigher
Its meaner goal.

And power is his, if naught besides,
In that thin ether where he rides,
Above the roar of human tides
To ascend afar,
Lost in a storm of light that hides
His dizzy car.

But, as he cleaves yon ether clear,
Notes from the unattempted sphere

He scatters to the far-off ear
  Of Earth's dim throng.
Nay, from the zenith he flings sheer
  His torrent of song.

In other shapes than he forecast,
Fate moulds the Morrow. His fierce blast, —
His wild assault upon the Past, —
  These things are vain.
Brief is Revolt, but born to last
  Was the arrowy strain,

That seems the wandering voices blent
Of every virgin element;
A sound from azure spaces sent;
  An airy call
From the Uranian firmament
  O'erdoming all.

And in this world of worldings, where
Souls rust in apathy, and ne'er
A great emotion shakes the air,
  And life flags tame,
And rare is noble impulse, rare
  The impassioned aim,

'Tis no mean fortune to have heard
A singer who, if errors blurred
His sight, had yet a spirit stirred
  By vast desire,
And ardour fledging the swift word
  With plumes of fire.

A creature of impetuous breath,
Our torpor deadlier than death
He knew not; whatsoe'er he saith
  Flashes with life:

He spurreth men, he quickeneth
To splendid strife.

And in his gusts of song he brings
Wild odours shaken from strange wings.
And carries secret whisperings
From far lips blown,
While all the rapturous heart of things
Throbs through his own, —

His own that from the burning pyre
One who had loved his wind-swept lyre
Out of the sharp teeth of the fire
Unmolten drew,
Beside the sea that in her ire
Smote him and slew.

LEAVETAKING

Pass, thou wild light,
Wild light on peaks that so
Grieve to let go
The day.
Lovely thy tarrying, lovely too is night:
Pass thou away.

Pass, thou wild heart,
Wild heart of youth that still
Hast half a will
To stay.
I grow too old a comrade, let us part.
Pass thou away.

WORLD-STRANGENESS

Strange the world about me lies,
Never yet familiar grown —

Still disturbs me with surprise,
  Haunts me like a face half known.

In this house with starry dome,
  Floored with gemlike plains and seas,
Shall I never feel at home,
  Never wholly be at ease?

On from room to room I stray,
  Yet my Host can ne'er espy,
And I know not to this day
  Whether guest or captive I.

So, between the starry dome
  And the floor of plains and seas,
I have never felt at home,
  Never wholly been at ease.

A. E. HOUSMAN (b. 1859)

A Shropshire Lad was published in 1896. It immediately became famous, and established its author as one of the most notable influences in contemporary poetry. Nowhere have the tenderness and the poignancy of rustic life caught a truer lyric tone, and it is a remarkable circumstance that by this one small book its poet has enjoyed a continually advancing prestige through a quarter of a century. In 1922, Professor Housman published his *Last Poems*, a small collection which, if it cannot be said to excel its predecessor, has at least the commanding merit of being a worthy complement to the earlier work.

Professor Housman, it may be added, is one of the most distinguished of living Latinists and was appointed to the Chair of Latin at Cambridge University in 1911.

LOVELIEST OF TREES

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

BREDON [1] HILL

In summertime on Bredon
The bells they sound so clear;
Round both the shires they ring them
In steeples far and near,
A happy noise to hear.

Here of a Sunday morning
My love and I would lie,
And see the coloured counties,
And hear the larks so high
About us in the sky.

The bells would ring to call her
In valleys miles away:
"Come all to church, good people;
Good people, come and pray."
But here my love would stay.

[1] Pronounced Breedon.

And I would turn and answer
  Among the springing thyme,
"Oh, peal upon our wedding,
  And we will hear the chime,
  And come to church in time."

But when the snows at Christmas
  On Bredon top were strown,
My love rose up so early
  And stole out unbeknown
  And went to church alone.

They tolled the one bell only,
  Groom there was none to see,
The mourners followed after,
  And so to church went she,
  And would not wait for me.

The bells they sound on Bredon,
  And still the steeples hum.
"Come all to church, good people" —
  Oh, noisy bells, be dumb;
  I hear you, I will come.

THE WELSH MARCHES

High the vanes of Shrewsbury gleam
Islanded in Severn stream;
The bridges from the steepled crest
Cross the water east and west.

The flag of morn in conqueror's state
Enters at the English gate:
The vanquished eve, as night prevails,
Bleeds upon the road to Wales.

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Ages since the vanquished bled
Round my mother's marriage-bed;
There the ravens feasted far
About the open house of war:

When Severn down to Buildwas ran
Coloured with the death of man,
Couched upon her brother's grave
The Saxon got me on the slave.

The sound of fight is silent long
That began the ancient wrong;
Long the voice of tears is still
That wept of old the endless ill.

In my heart it has not died,
The war that sleeps on Severn side;
They cease not fighting, east and west,
On the marches of my breast.

Here the truceless armies yet
Trample, rolled in blood and sweat;
They kill and kill and never die;
And I think that each is I.

None will part us, none undo
The knot that makes one flesh of two,
Sick with hatred, sick with pain,
Strangling — When shall we be slain?

When shall I be dead and rid
Of the wrong my father did?
How long, how long, till spade and hearse
Put to sleep my mother's curse?

WITH RUE MY HEART IS LADEN

With rue my heart is laden
For golden friends I had,
For many a rose-lipt maiden
And many a lightfoot lad.

By brooks too broad for leaping
The lightfoot boys are laid;
The rose-lipt girls are sleeping
In fields where roses fade.

THE FIRST OF MAY

The orchards half the way
From home to Ludlow fair
Flowered on the first of May
In Mays when I was there;
And seen from stile or turning
The plume of smoke would show
Where fires were burning
That went out long ago.

The plum broke forth in green,
The pear stood high and snowed,
My friends and I between
Would take the Ludlow road;
Dressed to the nines and drinking
And light in heart and limb,
And each chap thinking
The fair was held for him.

Between the trees in flower
New friends at fairtime tread
The way where Ludlow tower
Stands planted on the dead.

Our thoughts, a long while after,
They think, our words they say;
Theirs now's the laughter,
The fair, the first of May.

Ay, yonder lads are yet
The fools that we were then;
For oh, the sons we get
Are still the sons of men.
The sumless tale of sorrow
Is all unrolled in vain:
May comes to-morrow
And Ludlow fair again.

WHEN FIRST MY WAY

When first my way to fair I took
Few pence in purse had I,
And long I used to stand and look
At things I could not buy.

Now times are altered: if I care
To buy a thing, I can;
The pence are here and here's the fair;
But where's the lost young man?

— To think that two and two are four
And neither five nor three
The heart of man has long been sore
And long 'tis like to be.

GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL (b. 1867)

Familiarly known as "A. E." One of the leading figures in what is known as the Celtic Revival, but more detached in his views and practice as a poet than some of his fellows. He has taken a foremost part in Irish

public life, being an acknowledged authority on agriculture. He helped in the founding of the new theatre in Ireland, but was not as intimately associated with its development as Lady Gregory, W. B. Yeats, and J M. Synge. His personal influence on the younger Irish writers has for years been a very active one, but his poetry has mostly kept aloof from schools and movements. Much of it was written before 1900, but since then he has gone quietly on in his own creative mood, winning fresh admiration and seeking no popularity.

THE GIFT[1]

I THOUGHT, beloved, to have brought to you
A gift of quietness and ease and peace,
Cooling your brow as with the mystic dew
Dropping from twilight trees.

Homeward I go not yet; the darkness grows;
Not mine the voice to still with peace divine:
From the first fount the stream of quiet flows
Through other hearts than mine.

Yet of my night I give to you the stars,
And of my sorrow here the sweetest gains,
And out of hell, beyond its iron bars,
My scorn of all its pains.

A SUMMER NIGHT[1]

HER mist of primroses within her breast
Twilight hath folded up, and o'er the west,
Seeking remoter valleys long hath gone,
Not yet hath come her sister of the dawn.
Silence and coolness now the earth enfold,
Jewels of glittering green, long mists of gold,
Hazes of nebulous silver veil the height,

[1] From *Collected Poems*. Copyright, 1926, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

And shake in tremors through the shadowy night.
Heard through the stillness, as in whispered words,
The wandering God-guided wings of birds
Ruffle the dark. The little lives that lie
Deep hid in grass join in a long-drawn sigh
More softly still; and unheard through the blue
The falling of innumerable dew,
Lifts with grey fingers all the leaves that lay
Burned in the heat of the consuming day.
The lawns and lakes lie in this night of love,
Admitted to the majesty above.
Earth with the starry company hath part;
The waters hold all heaven within her heart,
And glimmer o'er with wave-lips everywhere
Lifted to meet the angel lips of air.
The many homes of men shine near and far,
Peace-laden as the tender evening star,
The late home-coming folk anticipate
Their rest beyond the passing of the gate,
And tread with sleep-filled hearts and drowsy feet.
Oh, far away and wonderful and sweet
All this, all this. But far too many things
Obscuring, as a cloud of seraph wings
Blinding the seeker for the Lord behind,
I fall away in weariness of mind.
And think how far apart are I and you,
Beloved, from those spirit children who
Felt but one single Being long ago,
Whispering in gentleness and leaning low
Out of its majesty, as child to child.
I think upon it all with heart grown wild.
Hearing no voice, howe'er my spirit broods,
No whisper from the dense infinitudes,
This world of myriad things whose distance awes.
Ah me; how innocent our childhood was!

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (b. 1865)

The outstanding figure of the Celtic Revival. In conjunction with Lady Gregory and John Millington Synge he directed the famous Abbey Theatre in Dublin after its foundation by William and Frank Fay, and there he wrote and produced the verse plays that have formed so considerable a part of his achievement as poet. He has received the Nobel Prize for literature, and has been a Senator of the new Irish Free State. Chapters of his autobiography have appeared in close relation to a series of metaphysical studies in prose. But, while his work as a whole is never likely to fall into neglect, it is by his lyrical genius that he will most generally be remembered. He is one of the rare examples of a poet who has advanced steadily in intellectual scope and maturity without losing his lyric note. His later poems may in a sense be more difficult than his early ones, but they are not less lovely. He had published verse before 1900, indeed before 1890, but he remains in his latest work a representative poet of the age.

THE SONG OF WANDERING ÆNGUS[1]

I went out to the hazel wood,
Because a fire was in my head,
And cut and peeled a hazel wand,
And hooked a berry to a thread;
And when white moths were on the wing,
And moth-like stars were flickering out,
I dropped the berry in a stream
And caught a little silver trout.

When I had laid it on the floor
I went to blow the fire a-flame,
But something rustled on the floor,
And someone called me by my name:

[1] From *Later Poems*. Copyright, 1924, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

It had become a glimmering girl
With apple blossom in her hair
Who called me by my name and ran
And faded through the brightening air.

Though I am old with wandering
Through hollow lands and hilly lands,
I will find out where she has gone,
And kiss her lips and take her hands;
And walk among long dappled grass,
And pluck till time and times are done
The silver apples of the moon,
The golden apples of the sun.

WHEN YOU ARE OLD[1]

When you are old and gray and full of sleep
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead,
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE[1]

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

[1] From *Early Poems and Stories*. Copyright, 1925, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes
dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the
cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements
gray,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

THE FIDDLER OF DOONEY[1]

When I play on my fiddle in Dooney,
Folk dance like a wave of the sea;
My cousin is priest in Kilvarnet,
My brother in Moharabuiee.

I passed my brother and cousin:
They read in their books of prayer;
I read in my books of songs
I bought at the Sligo fair.

When we come at the end of time,
To Peter sitting in state,
He will smile on the three old spirits,
But call me first through the gate;

For the good are always the merry,
Save by an evil chance,
And the merry love the fiddle,
And the merry love to dance:

And when the folk there spy me,
They will all come up to me,

[1] From *Later Poems*. Copyright, 1924, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

With "Here is the fiddler of Dooney!"
And dance like a wave of the sea.

DOWN BY THE SALLEY GARDENS [1]

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;
She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grown on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

In a field by the river my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand.
She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears.

SEPTEMBER, 1913 [2]

What need you, being come to sense,
But fumble in a greasy till
And add the halfpence to the pence
And prayer to shivering prayer, until
You have dried the marrow from the bone;
For men were born to pray and save,
Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,
It's with O'Leary in the grave.

Yet they were of a different kind
The names that stilled your childish play
They have gone about the world like wind,
But little time had they to pray

[1] From *Early Poems and Stories*. Copyright, 1925, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

[2] From *Later Poems*. Copyright, 1924, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

For whom the hangman's rope was spun,
And what, God help us, could they save:
Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,
It's with O'Leary in the grave.

Was it for this the wild geese spread
The grey wing upon every tide;
For this that all that blood was shed,
For this Edward Fitzgerald died,
And Robert Emmet and Wolfe Tone,
All that delirium of the brave;
Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,
It's with O'Leary in the grave.

Yet could we turn the years again,
And call those exiles as they were,
In all their loneliness and pain
You'd cry "some woman's yellow hair
Has maddened every mother's son:"
They weighed so lightly what they gave,
But let them be, they're dead and gone,
They're with O'Leary in the grave.

TO A FRIEND WHOSE WORK HAS COME TO NOTHING[1]

Now all the truth is out,
Be secret and take defeat
From any brazen throat,
For how can you compete,
Being honour bred, with one
Who were it proved he lies
Were neither shamed in his own
Nor in his neighbours' eyes;
Bred to a harder thing
Than Triumph, turn away

[1] From *Later Poems*. Copyright, 1925, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

And like a laughing string
Whereon mad fingers play
Amid a place of stone,
Be secret and exult,
Because of all things known
That is most difficult.

IT IS TIME THAT I WROTE MY WILL

It is time that I wrote my will;
I choose upstanding men,
That climb the streams until
The fountain leap, and at dawn
Drop their cast at the side
Of dripping stone; I declare
They shall inherit my pride,
The pride of people that were
Bound neither to Cause nor to State,
Neither to slaves that were spat on,
Nor to the tyrants that spat,
The people of Burke and of Grattan
That gave, though free to refuse —
Pride, like that of the morn,
When the headlong light is loose,
Or that of the fabulous horn,
Or that of the sudden shower
When all the streams are dry,
Or that of the hour
When the swan must fix his eye
Upon a fading gleam,
Float out upon a long
Last reach of glittering stream
And there sing his last song.
And I declare my faith;
I mock Plotinus' thought
And cry in Plato's teeth,
Death and life were not

Till man made up the whole,
Made lock, stock and barrel
Out of his bitter soul,
Aye, sun and moon and star, all,
And further add to that
That, being dead, we rise,
Dream and so create

Translunar Paradise.
I have prepared my peace
With learned Italian things
And the proud stones of Greece,
Poet's imaginings
And memories of love,
Memories of the words of women,
All those things whereof
Man makes a superhuman,
Mirror-resembling dream.

As at the loophole there,
The daws chatter and scream,
And drop twigs layer upon layer.
When they have mounted up,
The mother bird will rest
On their hollow top,
And so warm her wild nest.

I leave both faith and pride
To young upstanding men
Climbing the mountain side,
That under bursting dawn
They may drop a fly;
Being of that metal made
Till it was broken by
This sedentary trade.

Now shall I make my soul
Compelling it to study

In a learned school
Till the wreck of body
Slow decay of blood,
Testy delirium
Or dull decrepitude,
Or what worse evil come —
The death of friends, or death

Of every brilliant eye
That made a catch in the breath —
Seem but the clouds of the sky
When the horizon fades;
Or a bird's sleepy cry
Among the deepening shades.

PART II

MICHAEL FIELD

THE poet known by this name was in reality two women, Katherine Harris Bradley, who died in 1914, and her niece, Edith Emma Cooper, who died in 1913. A more remarkable instance of poetic collaboration has never occurred. Mr. Sturge Moore, in his edition of Michael Field's *Selected Poems* makes a few attributions of separate authorship, but in general the poems were created by these two poets in community. Michael Field's religious lyrics are a real and passionate enrichment of that very difficult form of poetry, and her secular work, sometimes splendidly aloof in bearing, is always glowing at the core. These poets wrote also a number of verse dramas, but, like most other dramatic poets of our time, found no living theatre to encourage and develop their aspirations in this respect.

MARIONETTES

WE met
After a year. I shall never forget
How odd it was for our eyes to meet,
For we had to repeat
In our glances the words that we had said
In days when, as our lashes lifted
Or drooped, the universe was shifted.
We had not closed with the past, then why
Did the sense come over us as a fetter
That all we did, speaking eye to eye,
Had been done before, and so much better?
I think — but there's no saying,
What made us so hateful was the rage

Of our souls at finding themselves a stage
Where Marionettes were playing;
For a great actor once had trod
Those boards, and played the god.

THOU COMEST DOWN TO DIE

Thou comest down to die,
Each day to die for me;
Hasting with feet that fly
Down from the Trinity.

How beautiful Thy Feet,
Even as Hermes' are,
That Thou shouldst run so fleet
To Golgotha!

Each day another girds
And binds Thee to the Wood.
I sing, as singing birds,
The glory of Thy Mood.

IF THEY HONOURED ME, GIVING ME THEIR GIFTS

Αἴ με τιμίαν ἐπόησαν ἔργα
τὰ σφὰ δοῖσαι.

They bring me gifts, they honour me,
Now I am growing old;
And wondering youth crowds round my knee,
As if I had a mystery
And worship to unfold.

To me the tender, blushing bride
Doth come with lips that fail;
I feel her heart beat at my side
And cry: "Like Ares in his pride,
Hail, noble bridegroom, hail!"

And to the doubting boy, afraid
Of too ambitious bliss,
I whisper: "None is like thy maid,
And I her fond heart will persuade
To feel thou feelest this."

Or if Persephone should take
From me some maid full dear,
While friends their lamentations make,
I rise, and for the lover's sake
I praise her loud and clear.

Ye bring me gifts, ye honour me
For music and for rhyme;
And if at last my soul sings free,
It is that once I stood, as ye,
Dumb in youth's golden clime.

THE TRAGIC MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

Ah me, if I grew sweet to man
It was but as a rose that can
No longer keep the breath that heaves
And swells among its folded leaves.

The pressing fragrance would unclose
The flower, and I became a rose,
That unimpeachable and fair
Planted its sweetness in the air.

No art I used men's love to draw;
I lived but by my being's law,
As roses are by heaven designed
To bring the honey to the wind.

LAURENCE BINYON (b. 1869)

BEGAN publishing verse in the early "nineties," and has been steadily loyal to an austere formal beauty ever since. That his creative power has not suffered in the process is shown in *The Sirens*, published as recently as 1924, in which many critics find his most notable achievement. He has for many years been a high official in the Prints Department of the British Museum, and is one of the foremost living authorities on oriental art. He is one of the few men to win the Newdigate Prize at Oxford and achieve distinction in later life as a poet.

JOHN WINTER[1]

WHAT ails John Winter, that so oft
  Silent he sits apart?
The neighbours cast their looks on him;
  But deep he hides his heart.

In Deptford streets the houses small
  Huddle forlorn together.
Whether the wind blow or be still,
  'Tis soiled and sorry weather.

But over these dim roofs arise
  Tall masts of ocean ships.
Whenever John Winter looked on them,
  The salt blew on his lips.

He cannot pace the street about,
  But they stand before his eyes!
The more he shuns them, the more proud
  And beautiful they rise.

He turns his head, but in his ear
  The steady Trade-winds run,

[1] From *Selected Poems*. Copyright, 1922, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

And in his eye the endless waves
  Ride on into the sun.

His little child at evening said,
  Now tell us, Dad, a tale
Of naked men that shoot with bows,
  Tell of the spouting whale!

He told old tales, his eyes were bright,
  His wife looked up to see
And smiled on him: but in the midst
  He ended suddenly.

He bade his boys good-night, and kissed
  And held them to his breast.
They wondered and were still, to feel
  Their lips so fondly pressed.

He sat absorbed in silent gloom.
  His wife lifted her head
From sewing, and stole up to him.
  What ails you, John? she said.

He spoke no word. A silent tear
  Fell softly down her cheek.
She knelt beside him, and his hand
  Was on her forehead meek.

But even as his tender touch
  Her dumb distress consoled,
The mighty waves danced in his eyes
  And through the silence rolled.

There fell a soft November night,
  Restless with gusts that shook
The chimneys, and beat wildly down
  The flames in the chimney nook.

John Winter lay beside his wife.
'Twas past the mid of night.
Softly he rose, and in dead hush
Stood stealthily upright.

Softly he came where slept his boys,
And kissed them in their bed.
One stretched his arms out in his sleep;
At that he turned his head.

And now he bent above his wife.
She slept a sleep serene.
Her patient soul was in the peace
Of breathing slumber seen

At last he kissed one aching kiss,
Then shrank again in dread,
And from his own home guiltily
And like a thief he fled.

But now with darkness and the wind
He breathes a breath more free,
And walks with calmer step like one
Who goes with destiny.

And see, before him the great masts
Tower with all their spars
Black on the dimness, soaring bold
Among the mazy stars.

In stormy rushings through the air
Wild scents the darkness filled,
And with a fierce forgetfulness
His drinking nostril thrilled.

He hasted with quick feet, he hugged
The wildness to his breast,

As one who goes the only way
To set his heart at rest.

When morning glimmered, a great ship
Dropt gliding down the shore.
John Winter coiled the anchor ropes
Among his mates once more.

From THE SIRENS, I, 4 [1]

Hymn the Finders! Hymn the bold
Trusters of Earth, those patient ones,
That listen to the subtle words
Of Silence in the streams and stones;
Ponderers of the secret-souled
Bodies quick with ignorant being;
Followers of the clues that thread
Differences and accords;
Wooers of what powers agreeing
May the hands of man bestead;
Seers who have turned aside
From the greeds that ask and ache
Blinded to all else beside, —
Letting the clear spirit take
Truth from vision open-eyed.
Breaks the bud for him that sees
In a world of promises.

Hymn the breaker of the dark,
Hymn the finder of the flame,
Troubler of the essential spark
Lurking in the withered pith
Or from stony prison freed,
Friend and fury, holy need
And fierce destroyer, hard to tame,
Risen, a God to wrestle with!
Hymn the bender of the wheel,

[1] From *Selected Poems*. Copyright, 1922, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Mother of the shapes of speed!
Hymn the launcher of the keel
Carrying thought's arrow-aim
Beyond the sundown, — sowing seed
Of man on coasts untrod before,
To widen memory's haunted shore
And add the nearness of a name.

Far-descended old desire!
That stirred in swarming forest-ages,
Prowled by fear whose stealthy eye
Watched from glooms, where hunger-rages
Ravened; see at last the Hand
Emerging human, stretched to try
Shapes of things with wondering pleasure,
When its strength forgets to kill;
Tempted on to understand,
Serving ways of secret will, —
Fit and fashion, poise and measure.
Hymn the hand that builds the wall
And spans the river, and arches over
Man the worshipper and lover
Song-like stone; the hand so strong
To strike, yet in whose touch is all
Life's mystery that wooes from things
Their strength, as music from the strings, —
Touch of the mind that seeks behind
The world for the befriending Mind.

Hymn the openers of the gates,
Hymn the changers of the fates!
Hymn the seekers! them that saw,
Past the seeming starry roof
Of human earth, in mazy plan
Bright eternities of law;
Them that neared those orbs to man,
Unafraid, and put to proof

Divination's ancient scheme;
Stept into the timeless stream,
Star-like spirits among the stars!
Hymn the seekers! Chosen souls,
Grapnel'd in the very marrow
By a thought that night and day
Draws them whither their unknown
Mighty lover far away
Beckons them to the frore Poles
Or new meridians; like to him
Who climbed in Panama the tree,
And splendour of untravelled sea
Smote him like a glorious arrow:
Never shall he rest again
Till he sail that virgin main!
Or like him who quietly
Sitting in his Polar tent
Found so great a way to die;
Hope-forsaken, famine-spent,
Wrote his words of faith and cheer
Till the pen dropt from the hand
That wrote them.
Hymn the lost, who never
Found, but kept high heart to steer
Onward toward the mark they meant,
Sailing out of sight of land.
Wail not them, nor lost endeavour,
For they heard what tranced the ear,
Filled the exulting soul, the song
Pale and prudent mortals fear,
Song of those who, out of Time,
Sing the heights the immortals climb,
The Sirens.

T. STURGE MOORE (b. 1870)

A POET who has been publishing work of grave and classic beauty since 1900. Classic is a dangerous word, but it fitly describes the dominant character of Mr. Sturge Moore's poetry. Not only has he drawn very largely upon classic material for his themes, but he has invested it always in a spare and scrupulous idiom. Behind this clear formality is a vivid consciousness of contemporary life, that sometimes asserts itself with a charming playfulness, as in *Beautiful Meals*. Mr. Sturge Moore is a designer as well as a poet, and his woodcuts and book-covers are greatly prized by the discerning.

TO IDLENESS

O IDLENESS, too fond of me.
Begone, I know and hate thee!
Nothing canst thou of pleasure see
In one that so doth rate thee;

For empty are both mind and heart
While thou with me dost linger;
More profit would to thee impart
A babe that sucks its finger.

I know thou hast a better way
To spend these hours thou squand'rest;
Some lad toils in the trough to-day
Who groans because thou wand'rest;

A bleating sheep he dowses now
Or wrestles with ram's terror;
Ah, 'mid the washing's hubbub, how
His sighs reproach thine error!

He knows and loves thee, Idleness;
For when his sheep are browsing,

His open eyes enchant and bless
A mind divinely drowsing;

No slave to sleep, he wills and sees
From hill-lawns the brown tillage;
Green winding lanes and clumps of trees,
Far town or nearer village.

The sea itself; the fishing fleet
Where more, thine idle lovers,
Heark'ning to sea-mews find thee sweet
Like him who hears the plovers.

Begone; those haul their ropes at sea,
These plunge sheep in yon river:
Free, free from toil thy friends, and me
From Idleness deliver!

BEAUTIFUL MEALS

How nice it is to eat!
All creatures love it so,
That they who first did spread,
Ere breaking bread,
A cloth like level snow,
Were right, I know.

And they were wise and sweet
Who, glad that meats taste good,
Used speech in an arch style,
And oft would smile
To raise the cheerful mood,
While at their food.

And those who first, so neat,
Placed fork and knife quite straight,
The glass on the right hand;

And all, as planned,
Each day set round the plate, —
Be their praise great!

For then, their hearts being light,
They plucked hedgeposies bright —
Flowers who, their scent being sweet,
Give nose and eye a treat:
'Twas they, my heart can tell,
Not eating fast but well,
Who wove the spell
Which finds me every day,
And makes each meal-time gay;
I know 'twas they.

"MUCH VIRTUE IN IF"

If I were king of this broad land,
And you were England's queen,
All high-roads should be glades of lawn,
All byways mossed and green;

The seashore should be lengthened out
With beach, and rock, and sand,
Till the most rural hamlet lay
Scarce seven mile inland.

Yea, long sea arms should wind and thread
Our midlands through and through,
That foresters and shepherd lads
Might watch the salt and blue.

Then caravans and pedlars,
Replacing shop and street,
Should bring folk dainty things to wear
And luscious things to eat.

A few of the great changes these,
On which we might decide,
If I were in Westminster throned
With you crowned at my side.

THESEUS

"What am I? O thou sea, with all thy noise,
Thou tell'st me not: — and thou great sun, that leavest
Once more thy ruby red on little clouds
Where thou hast dived from sight, art mute and art
No parent of an answer to my prayer,
My daily prayer to thee. Those clouds, are they
As I am? and shall I, as they will, lose
What fastens now the eyes of men on me?
Youth, as they say, is that but as yon red
Which dims while I gaze on it, dims and fails
Before the breath of all-disabling night?
It makes me shudder: is there such a cave
That breathes on youth and freezes manhood's glow?
A gulf to swallow hope as night those tints?
And shall I scurry as the storm-chased cloud,
Darkling and teased to tears, and torn with groans?
Ah, must it come upon me to be spent
And no more heard of? Will blank replace me?

Yea, even the old man, who has lived well
Whose smile of fortitude has blessed and blessed,
Day after day, his friends through fifty years,
When his knees totter and his arm grows weak,
Though the gods love him, yet, to please Fate, he
Must be content to palter and lose all;
'Neath cover of a smile, be quite undone,
Yea, steal away, stand by, and let the grand
Converging circumstances tempt in vain
To some exploit worthy his life laid down,
Needed by all the world, but which weak hands

And knees that shake can now forbid him bring
To masterful fruition. Yea, Fate's fool,
Amidst the dearth of younger men endowed
With spirit and resources like his own,
He must sit down, give counsel, then unsay;
Even as I have had to fume 'mid men
Who lacked my heart, yet own'd the strength I lacked
And watch the chance go by — feeling it fleet,
The unseized moment when a god cried 'Dare!'
'Tis sullen Fate thus thwarts the hopeful god,
Thus ends the good man, thus begins with me.

It is so! comes upon me! I shall fail;
For I have failed before; each year have failed
To roll this stone aside, which hides the proof,
The sign of whether I am no man's son,
Begotten of a man who wore a sword,
Or of some rascal whose long tongue deceived
A woman's heart. Shame hounds me when I think
That I have cheeks which flush to hear men's praise,
Who cannot say that I am such an one,
And add thereto 'my father sails afar'
Or 'fetcheth golden apples from the tree
That the sweet women sit beneath and sing,'
Or 'is in Cyprus, where he works a mine,'
Or 'followeth wars in Thrace,' or 'seeks a cure
At Delphi for some strange unkind disease.'
Thus other lads can vaunt and need not come, —
What day the sun behind yon little isle,
Each autumn sets for one who standeth here, —
They need not come down to this lonely beach
And tug at this dull stone, till they are faint;
Nor as their limbs grow cold ache with despair,
To hope and craven fear not slaves by turns;
And, if they oftener bear defeat in speed
Or when we wrestle, fence, or hurl the quoit,
A father teacheth what there lacked, and how

With greatest likelihood to compass it.
While I
Visit my mother where she sits and works,
As women work, weaving in wall-cloths wide
Figures of men and gods, and hear her talk
As women talk, with smiles and hopeful words.
Oft will she bid me stand in such a way
As Heracles or Jason rightly stand,
Then silently doth bend her to her task,
That she may fill their pictures out from mine;
While I forget her and that busy room,
Watching those heroes lay the red fir poles
Before the prow of Argo on the grass,
High up some glade, high in the forest hills,
Whence the vast Ister and Absyrtus draw
Their waters, and where stags, of huger build
Than horses, stand forth on the brows of cliffs
And bell at man's intrusion, ere they turn
With long quick strides to seek yet virgin wilds.
From morn to eve, before the Argo there,
They laid the poles, then dragged her over them;
And on they toiled, week after week, right up;
Then rigged as 'twere a second keel of plank,
And sledded her across the fields of snow,
And to encircling ocean brought her down.
They did this: I, who helped them in my thought,
Have heard my mother laugh, and waked to know
She could not tell me who my father was."
Thus far the lad with many a heart-drawn sigh;
Then eased his shoulders of their short grey cloak,
And tossed his hat of straw upon the ground.
Firm in vague twilight, naked, fleckless, blond —
Save that a sandal strap still laced each foot
And that his head was dark with clustered curls —
He stood as those whose prayer bestirs mute lips;
Then gravely did approach a sea-worn rock
Half buried in the shingle, wan; for sand,

With which the scouring wind its slatey hue
Had scored, was lodged in all its hollows, wan
With livid marblings, lonely, rounded, smooth,
Planted as for a bourne unto that sea
Whose hoarse waves gnawed the grating beach hard by.
While, back from there, in dry and yellow reeds
Which belted the cove round, wind rattled bleak.
Beyond, dark hills rose, tranquil as the sky.
Suddenly his curls shook, he felt both arms,
Searched with his feet for purchase, then bent down
And digging with both hands in the loose beach
Obtained a thorough grip. His foothold gave
And gave beneath each crooked and straddled leg;
Their knees touched to the beach, pressed in, dug down,
While sinews on broad thighs, his hollowed loins,
And curved back hardened, knotted, and showed up:
Sweat, from a streaming forehead, dripped into
Those dangling curls which bounced before his eyes
And teased that burning furnace of his face:
But the stone gave, and his subsiding effort
Sank down upon it shifted in its bed.
Some time he sobbed, then knelt and sucked his hands
Bleeding and numb, and pinched between salt stones:
Rose then; his knees were raw; his chin was rasped,
For he had ground it on that sullen block;
With deep-drawn breaths he poised his limbs in the air,
Relaxed their o'er-strained joints, and chafed their thews;
And, having mopped his hot brow with his cloak,
Sat down and smiled because the stone had moved.

Yet soon, alas, a fear began to tease:
Then grew, and grew till it bedinned his brain,
Making all life seem madness, and the gods
Unhearing scorns at distances extreme.
— If he should roll the stone back from a blank,

An empty bed! His heart stood still! There was
No future; such a moment ought to be
The last! Yet, far within,
He saw all time succeed,
No consonancy in it with the days —
Those days of sterling effort, gone before.
He thought it best almost to now give up.
But then the all-conquering hope to find a god,
A hero at the least had been his sire,
Brought him upon his feet and cleared his mind:
That which was raised from good must go to good;
But from a lie the fair thing sprung at first
Would be reduced and end in utter waste.

Choosing such larger stones as gave foothold,
He banked them up where he his feet would rest;
And, having scooped quite clear sufficient grip
For his sore-smarting hands, a second time
He bowed his back and worked down with his knees,
And heeded not annoy from clammy curls,
But put his soul into his boyish arms,
And hugged and raised the stone, then rolled it over,
Dragged by sheer weight himself, dragged sideways
down; —

Not long to lie, for he had seen! now saw! —
For into heaven, lo! the moon had glid,
Between their woods the dewy hills were grey,
And 'mid the reeds lagoons were path'd with light,
While countless silver patines danced at sea, —
Saw! saw! in sheath of inlay capped with gold
A sword, its baldrick, and beneath, a shield
Cased in a leathern bag, but printed through,
And on the bag large words, "My son, my Theseus,
That worthy of thy sire now hast proved,
Come to me, come to Attica, in Athens,
Ask for King Ægeus, and bring with thee these."

HENRY NEWBOLT (b. 1862)

Sir Henry Newbolt has led an exceedingly active life as publisher, man of letters, editor, lawyer, and public worker. But he has won also a sure and peculiarly personal reputation as a poet. His verse covers a wide range, and covers it with authority, but as a maker of patriotic ballads he is, perhaps, unequalled by any writer of his time. It is a feat of uncommon difficulty to keep the note of a strictly national ardour within the compass of poetry, and it is one that this poet frequently attempts, but nearly always with success. *Drake's Drum* is one of those rare poems that are at once widely popular and of unquestionable poetic quality. And it is the kind of thing that Sir Henry Newbolt can do better than anyone else among living poets. The pieces here given are enough to show that it is not in this manner only that he excels.

MINORA SIDERA

(*The Dictionary of National Biography*)

Sitting at times over a hearth that burns
With dull domestic glow,
My thought, leaving the book, gratefully turns
To you who planned it so.

Not of the great only you deigned to tell —
The stars by which we steer —
But lights out of the night that flashed, and fell
To-night again, are here.

Such as were those, dogs of an elder day,
Who sacked the golden ports,
And those later who dared grapple their prey
Beneath the harbour forts:

Some with flag at the fore, sweeping the world
To find an equal fight,
And some who joined war to their trade, and hurled
Ships of the line in flight.

Whether their fame centuries long should ring
They cared not over-much,
But cared greatly to serve God and the King,
And keep the Nelson touch;

And fought to build Britain above the tide
Of wars and windy fate;
And passed content, leaving to us the pride
Of lives obscurely great.

GILLESPIE

Riding at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie left the town behind;
Before he turned by the Westward road
A horseman crossed him, staggering blind.

"The Devil's abroad in false Vellore,
The Devil that stabs by night," he said,
"Women and children, rank and file,
Dying and dead, dying and dead."

Without a word, without a groan,
Sudden and swift Gillespie turned,
The blood roared in his ears like fire,
Like fire the road beneath him burned.

He thundered back to Arcot gate,
He thundered up through Arcot town,
Before he thought a second thought
In the barrack yard he lighted down.

"Trumpeter, sound for the Light Dragoons,
Sound to saddle and spur," he said;
"He that is ready may ride with me,
And he that can may ride ahead."

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
Behind him went the troopers grim,
They rode as ride the Light Dragoons
But never a man could ride with him.

Their rowels ripped their horses' sides,
Their hearts were red with a deeper goad,
But ever alone before them all
Gillespie rode, Gillespie rode.

Alone he came to false Vellore,
The walls were lined, the gates were barred;
Alone he walked where the bullets hit,
And called above to the Sergeant's Guard.

"Sergeant, Sergeant, over the gate,
Where are your officers all?" he said;
Heavily came the Sergeant's voice,
"There are two living and forty dead."

"A rope, a rope," Gillespie cried:
They bound their belts to serve his need;
There was not a rebel behind the wall
But laid his barrel and drew his bead.

There was not a rebel among them all
But pulled his trigger and cursed his aim,
For lightly swung and rightly swung
Over the gate Gillespie came.

He dressed the line, he led the charge,
They swept the wall like a stream in spate,

And roaring over the roar they heard
The galloper guns that burst the gate.

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
The troopers rode the reeking flight:
The very stones remember still
The end of them that stab by night.

They've kept the tale a hundred years,
They'll keep the tale a hundred more:
Riding at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie came to false Vellore.

VITAÏ LAMPADA

THERE's a breathless hush in the Close to-night —
Ten to make and the match to win —
A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
An hour to play and the last man in.
And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,
Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,
But his Captain's hand on his shoulder smote —
"Play up! play up! and play the game!"

The sand of the desert is sodden red, —
Red with the wreck of a square that broke; —
The Gatling's jammed and the Colonel dead,
And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.
The river of death has brimmed his banks,
And England's far, and Honour a name,
But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks:
"Play up! play up! and play the game!"

This is the word that year by year,
While in her place the School is set,
Every one of her sons must hear,
And none that hears it dare forget.

This they all with a joyful mind
  Bear through life like a torch in flame,
And falling fling to the host behind —
  "Play up! play up! and play the game!"

CHARLES DOUGHTY (1843–1927)

FAMOUS for his great travel epic in prose, *Arabia Deserta*, Charles Doughty was also a remarkable poet. His curious employments of the English tongue make any widely popular recognition of his verse unlikely, but readers who are prepared to master its difficulties are rewarded by discovering a design of unusual force, and delighted by many occasional beauties. His idiosyncracy cannot be claimed as a merit, but it will not be allowed by posterity wholly to obscure the great merit that it too often confuses. Charles Doughty cannot be said to be characteristic of his age, but to that age he has added a certain shade of significance that is entirely his own revelation.

From WAYFARING, TO THE VALLEY OF THE DOVE

Piscator. In these fresh meadows, yet his quiet spirit
Abides: where he, with Cotton, used to fish.
Meseems, from yonder honey-suckle hedge,
And from each primrose bank, I hear their voices
Yet cheerfully sound. Methinks, with them communing,
I sit, and see the throstle feed her young:
And mark, how all things fitly be disposed,
And ordered, by the Giver of all good.
  I view the high procession of the Months;
Beginning with sweet Springtimes budded boughs;
When clothes the Earth Herself, with tender green;

And starring, in refreshed late Winter sod;
Pied daisies and glad celandine be seen.
When hangs the white flower blowing then in thorn;
Leap glad-eyed children hither, gathering posies;
Sweet violet, cicely, dainty ladies'-smocks;
With jacinth, medleyed in the thicket grass.
Key-flowers, brave king-cups then, forget-me-nots;
Whose living jewels, meynt with golden flags,
Loose-strife, trim meadow-sweet and water-mints;
Whilst season is, deck my Doves river borders.
Sith Summer pools, dight all with water lilies;
Which twining woodbine, eglantine and wild rose
O'er hang, with guirlands of sweet smelling flowers.
I trooping flocks see go in yonder bent;
And hear the swunken plough-swain cheer his team.
And so, without offense, to God or man;
I find the holiday hours, to entertain,
When I come hither fishing, of the time,
That lies before me: (short now stair it is;
Not many steps more,) to a welcome grave.
Sometimes a brother of the angle, as
Is twixt all anglers trusty fellowship;
Doth, in these early waters, with me fish:
One pleasantly, civilly both and wisely merry.
And many's the good dish of trouts we take;
Some for ourselves, nor fewer for poor folk:
Some too for neighbour friends. Our fishing ended;
Last time this way my brother Raymond came;
He trolled me out an old catch, as we turned home;
Which comes now to my mind. Was that a verse,
He said, which long ago had Kit Marlowe made.
And likely our father Walton had forgot,
To put it into pretty Maudlins mouth.
And to the changeful yodeling of his voice;
To sound, Doves valley-borders seemed again.

[*Song.*

Herdgroom. Thine eyes ben two cornflowers, they ben so blue;
Thy teeth dipped in milk, thy weed of the grey:
Thy kirtle is short:
Milkmaid. For light is my shoe.
Follow me, leaping over the lea.
Follow me over the hills so green.
Howt! little herdboy, that leads in the hollow.
Rud is my cheek and brown is my chin;
For Phœbus hath kissed me, both even and morrow.
Follow, follow, follow!

Then he sung
Another roundel light, in the like vein;
Sir Walter Raleigh, Donne or Wotton made.
She. My Love, my Love, my Love, he will come,
With his basket of sales.
On all the wide hills, like to Cuddy is not one;
By four coasts, drawende down to the dales.
My Love, my Love, my Love; he is come,
With his hackney from Ware.
Spring Mother, and see our tall Cuddy ride home:
Cud, what hast thou gotten, my dear?
He. Ike ha' got a scrip of pennies, for my cheese and my kine;
Fairings for mother and sister, among:
But, my dear heart, lo, yourn, all the new and the fine.
Kuss me soot, like when mother was young.

RONALD ROSS (b. 1857)

Sir Ronald Ross is honourably known to the world of science as the discoverer of the malarial germ in the mosquito. But he has also occasionally written poems of remarkable force and originality. He himself probably could not say how this happened, or how he ac-

quired his very personal mastery of a simple but satisfying technique. He is a poet neither of deliberation nor of sustained achievement, but the rare visiting mood has created verse that must always fill a notable page in any representative anthology of his time. The hymn written on the day after his great discovery is a very noble testimony from science to art.

POWER

Caligula, pacing thro' his pillar'd hall,
Ere yet the last dull glimmer of his mind
Had faded in the banquet, where reclined
He spent all day in drunken festival,

Made impious pretence that Jove with him,
Unseen, walk'd, talk'd and jested; for he spoke
To nothing by his side; or frown'd; or broke
In answering smiles; or shook a playful rim

Of raiment coyly. "Earth," he said, "is mine —
No vapour. Yet Caligula, brother Jove,
Will love thee if he find thee worthy love;
If not, his solid powers shall war with thine.

And break them, God of Cloud." The courtiers round,
As in the presence of two deities, bent
In servile scorn: when, like a warning sent,
An utterance of earthquake shook the ground,

Awful, but which no human meaning bore.
With glaring eyeballs narrowing in dismay,
The huddled creature fallen foaming lay,
Glass'd in the liquid marbles of the floor.

REPLY

I

This day relenting God
  Hath placed within my hand
A wondrous thing; and God
  Be praised. At his command,

Seeking His secret deeds
  With tears and toiling breath,
I find thy cunning seeds,
  O million-murdering Death.

I know this little thing
  A myriad men will save.
O Death, where is thy sting?
  Thy victory, O Grave?

II

Before Thy feet I fall,
  Lord, who made high my fate;
For in the mighty small
  Thou showedst the mighty great.

Henceforth I will resound
  But praises unto Thee;
Tho' I was beat and bound,
  Thou gavest me victory.

Tho' in these depths of night
  Deep-dungeon'd I was hurl'd,
Thou sentest me a light
  Wherewith to mend the world.

O Exile, while thine eyes
  Were weary with the night

Thou weepst; now arise
And bless the Lord of Light.

Hereafter let the lyre
Be bondsman to His name;
His thunder and His fire
Will fill thy lips with flame.

He is the Lord of Light;
He is the Thing That Is;
He sends the seeing sight;
And the right mind is His.

THE FATHER

Come with me then, my son;
Thine eyes are wide for truth:
And I will give thee memories,
And thou shalt give me youth.

The lake laps in silver,
The streamlet leaps her length:
And I will give thee wisdom,
And thou shalt give me strength

The mist is on the moorland,
The rain roughs the reed:
And I will give thee patience,
And thou shalt give me speed.

When lightnings lash the skyline
Then thou shalt learn thy part:
And when the heav'ns are direst,
For thee to give me heart.

Forthrightness I will teach thee;
The vision and the scope;

To hold the hand of honour: —
And thou shalt give me hope;

And when the heav'ns are deepest
And stars most bright above;
May God then teach thee duty;
And thou shalt teach me love.

. . . . . .

I dream'd, a wintry sunlight
Fill'd all the misted air,
And through the golden dead leaves
My son and I walk'd there,

And said, "We twain together
Will turn the fateful page;
And I will give thee all things
And thou shalt warm mine age."

But sudden an Angel stood there
And took his hand from mine;
The chill mist damp'd and darken'd;
They faded line by line.

The Angel cried in anger,
"Thou shalt not lead, but I;
Ye old men make the evils
Whereof the young men die."

. . . . . .

A stronger hand than mine, son,
Shall guide — a greater truth:
And I will keep remembrance,
And thou shalt — keep thy youth.

The lake laps in silver,
The streamlet leaps her length:
And I have still my wisdom,
But thou, not thou, thy strength.

The fog fills the moorland,
  The wind whips the reed:
And I have still more patience,
  But where is now thy speed?

The heav'ns are the blackest,
  The stars hid above:
Oh, God hath taught thee duty,
  More deep than any love.
. . . . . .
Cold, cold November,
  Tell me why thou art so sad?
"When leaves are falling,
  Shall I then, or thou, be glad?"

Why sigh so often,
  All ye passing gusts of wind?
"For the pale and beauteous,
  We have left, and thou, behind."

Why weep ye, grey clouds,
  O'er the black and blasted heath?
"For the cold and beauteous,
  That we see, and thou, beneath."

Cold, cold, they lie there,
  There our noble dear sons lie;
But, hear, ye Angels,
  Did they not in honour die?

Cold, cold, the answer
  From the mocking mistral came,
"They died in glory;
  But their glory is your shame."

HILAIRE BELLOC (b. 1870)

Widely known as essayist and historian, he has published a good deal less verse than he may be supposed to have written. But the little that we have is full of a witty tenderness that gives him a distinctive place among the poets of his time. Mr. Belloc has been, and still is, an eager controversialist, but whether we are disposed or not to agree with his views as expounded in provocative prose, we can rarely have any observation to offer on his engagingly limpid poems other than a cordial "Hear, hear!"

THE SOUTH COUNTRY

When I am living in the Midlands
That are sodden and unkind,
I light my lamp in the evening:
My work is left behind;
And the great hills of the South Country
Come back into my mind.

The great hills of the South Country
They stand along the sea;
And it's there walking in the high woods
That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Walking along with me.

The men that live in North England
I saw them for a day:
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
Their skies are fast and grey;
From their castle-walls a man may see
The mountains far away.

The men that live in West England
They see the Severn strong,

A-rolling on rough water brown
  Light aspen leaves along.
They have the secret of the Rocks,
  And the oldest kind of song.

But the men that live in the South Country
  Are the kindest and most wise,
They get their laughter from the loud surf,
  And the faith in their happy eyes
Comes surely from our Sister the Spring
  When over the sea she flies;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet,
  She blesses us with surprise.

I never get between the pines
  But I smell the Sussex air;
Nor I never come on a belt of sand
  But my home is there.
And along the sky the line of the Downs
  So noble and so bare.

A lost thing could I never find,
  Nor a broken thing to mend:
And I fear I shall be all alone
  When I get towards the end.
Who will there be to comfort me
  Or who will be my friend?

I will gather and carefully make my friends
  Of the men of the Sussex Weald,
They watch the stars from silent folds,
  They stiffly plough the field.
By them and the God of the South Country
  My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
  Or if ever I grow to be old,

I will build a house with deep thatch
To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood
Within a walk of the sea,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Shall sit and drink with me.

THE NIGHT

Most holy Night, that still dost keep
The keys of all the doors of sleep,
To me when my tired eyelids close
Give thou repose.

And let the far lament of them
That chaunt the dead day's requiem
Make in my ears, who wakeful lie,
Soft lullaby.

Let them that guard the horned moon
By my bedside their memories croon.
So shall I have new dreams and blest
In my brief rest.

Fold your great wings about my face,
Hide dawning from my resting-place,
And cheat me with your false delight,
Most Holy Night.

SONNET XVIII

When you to Acheron's ugly water come
Where darkness is and formless mourners brood
And down the shelves of that distasteful flood

Survey the human rank in order dumb.
When the pale dead go forward, tortured more
By nothingness and longing than by fire,
Which bear their hands in suppliance with desire,
With stretched desire for the ulterior shore.

Then go before them like a royal ghost
And tread like Egypt or like Carthage crowned;
Because in your Mortality the most
Of all we may inherit has been found —
Children for memory: the Faith for pride.
Good land to leave: and young Love satisfied.

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON (b. 1874)

Known to a large public by his novels and essays, Mr. Chesterton has also published several volumes of verse, and it is doubtful whether the most brilliant of his prose achievements will survive as long as such splendid poetry as *The Ballad of the White Horse*. A mind famous for its agility has been able to bring all sorts of engaging surprises into verse that is nevertheless forthright in its movement and decisive in its meaning. No writer of our time is able to lift the jingle of a ballad rhyme more surely to the level of poetry. Mr. Chesterton has lived a busy, buffeting life as a man of letters, but the conflict has mellowed his fun and given a deeper passion to his vision. His wit can sometimes be devastating in attack, but no wit was ever more wholly innocent of cynicism. He can storm, but never complains. A poet of high spirits and high indignations, he is so natural a singer that even his occasional verse takes a memorable turn, and his onsets are always too robust for bitterness. There are few poets who, taking one mood with another, are better company.

THE ROLLING ENGLISH ROAD

Before the Roman came to Rye or out of Severn strode,
The rolling English drunkard made the rolling English road.
A reeling road, a rolling road, that rambles round the shire,
And after him the parson ran, the sexton and the squire;
A merry road, a mazy road, and such as we did tread
The night we went to Birmingham by way of Beachy Head.

I knew no harm of Bonaparte and plenty of the Squire,
And for to fight the Frenchman I did not much desire;
But I did bash their baggonets because they came arrayed
To straighten out the crooked road an English drunkard made,
Where you and I went down the lane with ale-mugs in our hands,
The night we went to Glastonbury by way of Goodwin Sands.

His sins they were forgiven him; or why do flowers run
Behind him; and the hedges all strengthing in the sun?
The wild thing went from left to right and knew not which was which,
But the wild rose was above him when they found him in the ditch.
God pardon us, nor harden us; we did not see so clear
The night we went to Bannockburn by way of Brighton Pier.

My friends, we will not go again or ape an ancient rage,
Or stretch the folly of our youth to be the shame of age,

But walk with clearer eyes and ears this path that wandereth,
And see undrugged in evening light the decent inn of death;
For there is good news yet to hear and fine things to be seen,
Before we go to Paradise by way of Kensal Green.

THE DONKEY

When fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born;

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

Fools! For I also had my hour;
One far fierce hour and sweet:
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.

A CHRISTMAS SONG FOR THREE GUILDS

To be sung a long time ago — or hence

The Carpenters

St. Joseph to the Carpenters said on a Christmas Day:
"The master shall have patience and the 'prentice shall obey;

And your word unto your women shall be nowise hard or wild:
For the sake of me, your master, who have worshipped Wife and Child.
But softly you shall frame the fence, and softly carve the door,
And softly plane the table — as to spread it for the poor,
And all your thoughts be soft and white as the wood of the white tree.
But if they tear the Charter, let the tocsin speak for me!
Let the wooden sign above your shop be prouder to be scarred
Than the lion-shield of Lancelot that hung at Joyous Garde."

The Shoemakers

St. Crispin to the shoemakers said on a Christmastide:
"Who fashions at another's feet will get no good of pride.
They were bleeding on the Mountain, the feet that brought good news,
The latchet of whose shoes we were not worthy to unloose.
See that your feet offend not, nor lightly lift your head,
Tread softly on the sunlit roads the bright dust of the dead.
Let your own feet be shod with peace; be lowly all your lives.
But if they touch the Charter, ye shall nail it with your knives.
And the bill-blades of the commons drive in all as dense array
As once a crash of arrows came, upon St. Crispin's Day."

The Painters

St. Luke unto the painters on Christmas Day he said:
"See that the robes are white you dare to dip in gold and red;
For only gold the kings can give, and only blood the saints;
And his high task grows perilous that mixes them in paints.
Keep you the ancient order; follow the men that knew
The labyrinth of black and white, the maze of green and blue;
Paint mighty things, paint paltry things, paint silly things or sweet.
But if men break the Charter, you may slay them in the street.
And if you paint one post for them, then . . . but you know it well,
You paint a harlot's face to drag all heroes down to hell." 30

All Together

Almighty God to all mankind on Christmas Day said He:
"I rent you from the old red hills and, rending, made you free.
There was charter, there was challenge; in a blast of breath I gave;
You can be all things other; you cannot be a slave.
You shall be tired and tolerant of fancies as they fade,
But if men doubt the Charter, ye shall call on the Crusade —
Trumpet and torch and catapult, cannon and bow and blade,
Because it was My challenge to all the things I made."

CHARLES DALMON

Mr. Dalmon is a delightful representative of a group of gentle and unostentatious lyrists who continue to give a brightness to tradition without being troubled by its problems or those of revolt. His verse makes no sensational appeal, and it opens up no new ways of speculation, but the anthologist of a century hence, coming upon his unassuming volumes, may well experience the delight of finding here and there a treasure that time has been unable to tarnish.

CAMELOT

When Spring was running through the woods,
And buds were showing leaf and flower,
We read the *Book of Arthur* in
A coppice facing Holmbush Tower.

And, dreaming o'er the old romance
Together in so fair a spot,
What wonder if we smiled and said,
"Lo, yonder tow'r is Camelot!"

And scarcely had we spoken when
An old-time pilgrim touched our hands,
To say, "Young men, you linger on
The outskirts of King Arthur's lands."

"Yes, yes," we cried, "we know it, but
Which path leads up to Camelot?"
He, fumbling at his scrip, replied,
"I know it, and I know it not."

"O, pilgrim, kindly tell us when
The secret of it we may know!"
But, passing underneath the boughs,
He answered, very soft and low —

"Some find it when their hair is brown;
Some find it when their hair is white;
And you may seek it many years;
And you may find it out to-night."

SHE NO LONGER LOVES HIM

I'LL go no more on fancy flights
To sing of her and her delights,
But put on black, and sigh, and moan,
Because her heart is turned to stone.

Her eyes have lost their heavenly blue —
Their colour and their kindness too —
For all the love from them has flown,
Because her heart is turned to stone.

Her voice, that once was sweet and clear,
And full of music to the ear,
Now makes me wish to be alone,
Because her heart is turned to stone.

And all of her that seemed so fair —
Her hands, her lips, her cheeks, her hair —
Are things I do not wish to own,
Because her heart is turned to stone.

SEPARATION

No day has met another day,
No night another night has known;
Each must, alone,
Pass on, away.

And, looking in each other's eyes,
We from each other seem as far

As star from star
'Cross the skies.

Yes, they were happy years when we
Were both as one: but you can let
Your heart forget
The past with me.

Our play is ended: I could hear
Love weeping when the curtain fell.
I wish you well —
Good-by, my dear.

JOHN MASEFIELD (b. 1874)

HAVING attracted critical attention with his early *Salt Water Ballads*, Mr. Masefield found a wider public with his *Tragedy of Nan*, a prose play that was a notable addition to the repertory of the experimental theatres in the opening years of this century. Then with *The Everlasting Mercy* he showed how popular an appeal stirring narrative poetry could still have, and followed up this richly deserved success with *The Widow in the Bye Street*, *Dauber*, *Reynard The Fox*, and other poems of considerable length. To these he has since added many lovely lyrics, among which a long series of sonnets are especially memorable. He has also published several novels of adventure, and his *Gallipoli* will survive as one of the most important and eloquent records of the war. His poetry is of a curiously uneven texture. Few poets of anything like his power have been capable of such startling lapses, but no poet of our time has more frequently achieved passages and whole poems of flawless beauty. He has passed through the periods of early acclamation and subsequent disparagement, and now enjoys a well-founded reputation that his best work may safely be left to maintain.

CARGOES[1]

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rail, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

ON MALVERN HILL[2]

A wind is brushing down the clover,
  It sweeps the tossing branches bare,
Blowing the poising kestral over
  The crumbling ramparts of the Cær.

It whirls the scattered leaves before us
  Along the dusty road to home,
Once it awakened into chorus
  The heart-strings in the ranks of Rome.

There by the gusty coppice border
  The shrilling trumpets broke the halt,
The Roman line, the Roman order,
  Swayed forwards to the blind assault.

[1] From *The Story of a Round House*. Copyright, 1913, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

[2] From *Collected Poems*. Copyright, 1925, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Spearman and charioteer and bowman
Charged and were scattered into spray,
Savage and taciturn the Roman
Hewed upwards in the Roman way.

There — in the twilight — where the cattle
Are lowing home across the fields,
The beaten warriors left the battle
Dead on the clansmen's wicker shields.

The leaves whirl in the wind's riot
Beneath the Beacon's jutting spur,
Quiet are the clan and chief, and quiet
Centurion and signifer.

THE TARRY BUCCANEER [1]

I'm going to be a pirate with a bright brass pivot-gun,
And an island in the Spanish Main beyond the setting sun,
And a silver flagon full of red wine to drink when work is done,
Like a fine old salt-sea scavenger, like a tarry Buccaneer.

With a sandy creek to careen in, and a pig-tailed Spanish mate,
And under my main-hatches a sparkling merry freight
Of doubloons and double moidores and pieces of eight,
Like a fine old salt-sea scavenger, like a tarry Buccaneer.

With a taste for Spanish wine-shops and for spending my doubloons,
And a crew of swart mulattoes and black-eyed octoroons,

[1] From *Salt Water Ballads and Poems.* Copyright, 1916, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

And a thoughtful way with mutineers of making them
maroons,
Like a fine old salt-sea scavenger, like a tarry Buccaneer.

With a sash of crimson velvet and a diamond-hilted
sword,
And a silver whistle about my neck secured to a golden
cord,
And a habit of taking captives and walking them along
a board,
Like a fine old salt-sea scavenger, like a tarry Buccaneer.

With a spy-glass tucked beneath my arm and a cocked
hat cocked askew,
And a long low rakish schooner a-cutting of the waves
in two,
And a flag of skull and cross-bones the wickedest that
ever flew,
Like a fine old salt-sea scavenger, like a tarry Buccaneer.

THE CHIEF CENTURIONS

Man is a sacred city, built of marvellous earth.
Life was lived nobly here to give this body birth.
Something was in this brain and in this eager hand.
Death is so dumb and blind, Death cannot understand.
Death drifts the brain with dust and soils the young
limbs' glory.
Death makes women a dream and men a traveller's
story,
Death drives the lovely soul to wander under the sky,
Death opens unknown doors. It is most grand to
die.

SONNET [1]

Go, spend your penny, Beauty, when you will,
In the grave's darkness let the stamp be lost.
The water still will bubble from the hill,
And April quick the meadows with her ghost;
Over the grass the daffodils will shiver,
The primroses with their pale beauty abound,
The blackbird be a lover and make quiver
With his glad singing the great soul of the ground;
So that if the body rot, it will not matter;
Up in the earth the great game will go on,
The coming of spring and the running of the water,
And the young things glad of the womb's darkness gone.
And the joy we felt will be a part of the glory
In the lover's kiss that makes the old couple's story.

SONNET [1]

Roses are beauty, but I never see
Those blood drops from the burning heart of June
Glowing like thought upon the living tree
Without a pity that they die so soon,
Die into petals, like those roses old,
Those women, who were summer in men's hearts
Before the smile upon the Sphinx was cold
Or sand had hid the Syrian and his arts.
O myriad dust of beauty that lies thick
Under our feet that not a single grain
But stirred and moved in beauty and was quick
For one brief moon and died nor lived again;
But when the moon rose lay upon the grass
Pasture to living beauty, life that was.

ALFRED NOYES (b. 1880)

Mr. Noyes achieved great popularity as a poet immediately on leaving Oxford, and if in the following

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years a period of reaction set in, the fault was the public's rather than his own. Recently, however, he has in *The Torchbearers* more than confirmed his early promise. For some years he was a visiting professor at Princeton University. His verse sometimes may suffer from facility, but a poet's faults are no just criterion of his merit. And the merit of many of Mr. Noyes's poems should be obvious even to the most sophisticated reader. He has had little sympathy with the vagaries of fashion in verse, but his use of traditional forms has always been robust and flexible. He can set a scene, a mood, a creed, or a story, in good chiming periods with a rich vocabulary, and the whole world of history and contemporary life is grist to his poetic mill. He has written without constraint, lavishly, and the substantial volumes of his collected works bear witness to an energy that shows no signs of exhaustion. And energy that thus survives the first flush of youth is of no common or easy kind. A poet who shuns all preciosity, and is prodigal of his gifts, will make blunders, but Mr. Noyes has no reason to fear the inevitable process of sifting.

THE MAY-TREE [1]

The May-tree on the hill
  Stands in the night
So fragrant and so still
  So dusky white,

That, stealing from the wood
  In that sweet air,
You'd think Diana stood
  Before you there.

If it be so, her bloom
  Trembles with bliss.

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She waits across the gloom
Her shepherd's kiss.

Touch her. A bird will start
From those pure snows, —
The dark and fluttering heart
Endymion knows.

MOUNTAIN LAUREL [1]

(*The Green Mountain Poet sings*)

I HAVE been wandering in the lonely valleys,
Where mountain laurel grows;
And, in among the rocks, and the tall dark pine-trees
The foam of its young bloom flows,
In a riot of dawn-coloured stars, all drenched with the dew-fall,
And musical with the bee.
Let the fog-bound cities over their dead wreaths quarrel.
Wild laurel for me!

Wild laurel — moun'tain laurel —
Bright as the breast of a cloud at break of day,
White flowering laurel, wild mountain laurel,
Rose-dappled snowdrifts, warm with the honey of May!
On the happy hill-sides, in the green valleys of Connecticut,
Where the trout-streams go carolling to the sea,
I have walked with the lovers of song and heard them singing
Wild laurel for me!

Far, far away is the throng that has never known beauty,
Or looked upon unstained skies.
Did they think that our songs would scramble for withered bay-leaves
In the streets where the brown fig lies?

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They never have seen their wings, then, beating westward,
To the heights where song is free,
To the hills where laurel is drenched with the dawn's own colours,
Wild laurel for me!

Wild laurel — moun'tain laurel —
Where Robert o'Lincoln sings in the dawn and the dew.
White-flowering laurel — wild mountain laurel,
Where song springs fresh from the heart, and the heart is true!
They have gathered the sheep of their fold, but where is the eagle?
They have bridled their steeds, but when have they tamed the sea?
They have caged the wings, but never the heart of the singer.
Wild laurel for me!

If I never should see you again, O, lost companions,
When the rose-red month begins,
With the wood-smoke curling blue by the Indian river,
And the sound of the violins,
In dreams the breath of your green glens would still haunt me,
Where night and her stars, drawing down on blossom and tree,
Turn earth to heaven, and whisper their love till day-break.
Wild laurel for me!

Wild laurel — moun'tain laurel —
O, mount again, wild wings, to the stainless blue,
White-flowering laurel, wild mountain laurel,
And all the glory of song that the young heart knew.
I have lived. I have loved. I have sung in the happy valleys,

Where the trout-streams go carolling to the sea.
I have met the lovers of song in the sunset bringing
Wild laurel for me!

CREATION [1]

In the beginning there was nought
But heaven, one Majesty of Light,
Beyond all speech, beyond all thought,
Beyond all depth, beyond all height,
Consummate heaven, the first and last,
Enfolding in its perfect prime
No future rushing to the past,
But one rapt Now, that knew not Space or Time.

Formless it was, being gold on gold,
And void — but with that complete Life
Where music could no wings unfold
Till lo, God smote the strings of strife!
"Myself unto Myself am Throne,
Myself unto Myself am Thrall!
I that am All am all alone,"
He said, "Yea I have nothing, having all."

And, gathering round His mount of bliss
The angel-squadrons of His will,
He said, "One battle yet there is
To win, one vision to fulfil!
Since heaven where'er I gaze expands,
And power that knows no strife or cry,
Weakness shall bind and pierce my hands
And make a world for Me wherein to die.

All might, all vastness and all glory
Being mine, I must descend and make

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Out of my heart a song, a story
Of little hearts that burn and break;
Out of my passion without end
I will make little azure seas,
And into small sad fields descend
And make green grass, white daisies, rustling trees."

Then shrank His angels, knowing He thrust
His arms out East and West and gave
For every little dream of dust
Part of his Life as to a grave!
"*Enough, O Father, for thy words*
Have pierced thy hands!" But low and sweet,
He said "Sunsets and streams and birds,
And drifting clouds!" — The purple stain'd his feet. —

"Enough!" His angels moan'd in fear,
"*Father, thy words have pierced thy side!*"
He whispered "Roses shall grow there,
And there must be a hawthorn-tide,
And ferns, dewy at dawn," and still
They moan'd — *Enough, the red drops bleed!*
"And," sweet and low, "on every hill,"
He said, "I will have flocks and lambs to lead."

His angels bow'd their heads beneath
Their wings till that great pang was gone:
Pour not thy soul out unto Death!
They moan'd, and still his Love flow'd on,
"There shall be small white wings to stray
From bliss to bliss, from bloom to bloom,
And blue flowers in the wheat; and —" "*Stay!*
Speak not," they cried, "*the word that seals thy tomb!*"

He spake — "I have thought of a little child
That I will have there to embark

On small adventures in the wild,
  And front slight perils in the dark;
And I will hide from him and lure
  His laughing eyes with suns and moons,
And rainbows that shall not endure;
  And — when he is weary sing him drowsy tunes."

His angels fell before Him weeping,
  "*Enough! Tempt not the Gates of Hell!*"
He said "His soul is in his keeping
  That we may love each other well,
And lest the dark too much affright him,
  I will strew countless little stars
Across his childish skies to light him
  That he may wage in peace his mimic wars.

And oft forget Me as he plays
  With swords and childish merchandise,
Or with his elfin balance weighs,
  Or with his foot-rule metes, the skies;
Or builds his castles by the deep,
  Or tunnels through the rocks, and then —
Turn to Me as he falls asleep,
  And, in his dreams, feel for My hand again.

And when he is older he shall be
  My friend and walk here at My side;
Or — when he wills — grow young with Me,
  And, to that happy world where once we died
Descending through the calm blue weather,
  Buy life once more with our immortal breath,
And wander through the little fields together,
  And taste of Love and Death."

PART III

WILLIAM HENRY DAVIES (b. 1870)

One of the most purely spontaneous lyrists of his age, or, indeed, of any age in English poetry. His *Autobiography of a Super Tramp* faithfully tells the story of many adventurous years in his life, but as a poet his most distinctive note is rather one of infinitely curious contemplation than of such rougher ardours. The movement of his verse has an exquisite and almost unfailing felicity, and no poet of the time is richer in unexpected yet wholly fitting phrases. His delight in the common processes of nature is inexhaustible, and after singing them for nearly thirty years he can return to his beloved themes with astonishing freshness. His mind assumes a very pleasing simplicity, but his art, for all its apparent unsophistication, is in reality finished with the subtlest skill.

THE MOON

Thy beauty haunts me heart and soul,
  Oh thou fair Moon, so close and bright;
Thy beauty makes me like a child,
  That cries aloud to own thy light:
The little child that lifts each arm,
To press thee to her bosom warm.

Though there are birds that sing this night
  With thy white beams across their throats,
Let my deep silence speak for me
  More than for them their sweetest notes:
Who worships thee till music fails,
Is greater than thy nightingales.

THE KINGFISHER

It was the Rainbow gave thee birth,
  And left thee all her lovely hues;
And, as her mother's name was Tears,
  So runs it in thy blood to choose
For haunts the lonely pools, and keep
In company with trees that weep.

Go you and, with such glorious hues,
  Live with proud Peacocks in green parks;
On lawns as smooth as shining glass,
  Let every feather show its marks;
Get thee on boughs and clap thy wings
Before the windows of proud kings.

Nay, lovely Bird, thou art not vain;
  Thou hast no proud, ambitious mind;
I also love a quiet place
  That's green, away from all mankind;
A lonely pool, and let a tree
Sigh with her bosom over me.

LEISURE

What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

SWEET STAY-AT-HOME

Sweet Stay-at-Home, sweet Well-Content,
Thou knowest of no strange continent:
Thou hast not felt thy bosom keep
A gentle motion with the deep;
Thou hast not sailed in Indian seas,
Where scent comes forth in every breeze.
Thou hast not seen a summer's night
When maids could sew by a worm's light;
Nor the North Sea in spring send out
Bright hues that like birds flit about
In solid cages of white ice —
Sweet Stay-at-Home, sweet Love-one-Place.
Thou hast not seen black fingers pick
White cotton when the bloom is thick,
Nor heard black throats in harmony;
Nor hast thou sat on stones that lie
Flat on the earth, that once did rise
To hide proud kings from common eyes.
Thou hast not seen plains full of bloom
Where green things had such little room
They pleased the eye like fairer flowers —
Sweet Stay-at-Home, all these long hours.
Sweet Well-Content, sweet Love-one-Place,
Sweet, simple maid, bless thy dear face;
For thou hast made more homely stuff
Nurture thy gentle self enough;
I love thee for a heart that's kind —
Not for the knowledge in thy mind.

WALTER JOHN DE LA MARE (b. 1873)

A POET of very personal quality, both in his cadences and his imagination. Upon many staple forms of English lyric he has impressed a rhythmic subtlety of his own, and his invention is full of fugitive yet haunting undertones. He has won fame also as a novelist, chiefly with his *Memoirs of a Midget*, but his verse is too distinguished to fear the rivalry even of his own prose. His production as a poet has been leisurely, but it has never run thin. Sometimes, perhaps, the secret of his magic seems a little too closely kept, but there is none in contemporary poetry more enchanting to learn. Like Mr. Davies, he was one of the poets who most steadily lent lyric individuality to the successive volumes of Mr. Marsh's Georgian anthologies.

ARABIA

FAR are the shades of Arabia,
Where the Princes ride at noon,
'Mid the verdurous vales and thickets,
Under the ghost of the moon;
And so dark is that vaulted purple
Flowers in the forest rise
And toss into blossom 'gainst the phantom stars
Pale in the noonday skies.

Sweet is the music of Arabia
In my heart, when out of dreams
I still in the thin clear mirk of dawn
Descry her gilding streams;
Hear her strange lutes on the green banks
Ring loud with the grief and delight
Of the dim-silked, dark-haired Musicians
In the brooding silence of night.

They haunt me — her lutes and her forests;
No beauty on earth I see
But shadowed with that dream recalls
Her loveliness to me:
Still eyes look coldly upon me,
Cold voices whisper and say —
"He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia,
They have stolen his wits away."

THE LISTENERS

"Is there anybody there?" said the Traveller,
Knocking on the moonlit door;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor:
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
Above the Traveller's head:
And he smote upon the door again a second time;
"Is there anybody there?" he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller;
No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men:
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Hearkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveller's call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
'Neath the starred and leafy sky;
For he suddenly smote on the door, even
Louder, and lifted his head: —

"Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
From the one man left awake:
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

THE SCRIBE

WHAT lovely things
Thy hand hath made:
The smooth-plumed bird
In its emerald shade,
The seed of the grass,
The speck of stone
Which the wayfaring ant
Stirs — and hastes on!

Though I should sit
By some tarn in thy hills,
Using its ink
As the spirit wills
To write of Earth's wonders,
Its live, willed things,
Flit would the ages
On soundless wings
Ere unto Z
My pen drew nigh;
Leviathan told,
And the honey-fly:
And still would remain
My wit to try —

My worn reeds broken,
The dark tarn dry,
All words forgotten —
Thou, Lord, and I.

THE RIDDLERS

"Thou solitary!" the Blackbird cried,
"I, from the happy Wren,
Linnet and Blackcap, Woodlark, Thrush,
Perched all upon a sweetbrier bush,
Have come at cold of midnight-tide
To ask thee, Why and when
Grief smote thy heart so thou dost sing
In solemn hush of evening,
So sorrowfully, lovelorn Thing —
Nay, nay, not sing, but rave, but wail,
Most melancholic Nightingale?
Do not the dews of darkness steep
All pinings of the day in sleep?
Why, then, when rocked in starry nest
We mutely couch, secure, at rest,
Doth thy lone heart delight to make
Music for sorrow's sake?"
A Moon was there. So still her beam,
It seemed the whole world lay a-dream,
Lulled by the watery sea.
And from her leafy night-hung nook
Upon this stranger soft did look
The Nightingale: sighed he: —
"'Tis strange, my friend; the Kingfisher
But yestermorn conjured me here
Out of his green and gold to say
Why thou, in splendour of the noon,
Wearest of colour but golden shoon,
And else dost thee array
In a most sombre suit of black?

'Surely,' he sighed, 'some load of grief,
Past all our thinking — and belief —
Must weigh upon his back!'
Do, then, in turn, tell me, If joy
Thy heart as well as voice employ,
Why dost thou now, most Sable, shine
In plumage woefuller far than mine?
Thy silence is a sadder thing
Than any dirge I sing!"

Thus then these two small birds, perched there,
Breathed a strange riddle both did share
Yet neither could expound.
And we — who sing but as we can,
In the small knowledge of a man —
Have we an answer found?
Nay, some are happy whose delight
Is hid even from themselves from sight;
And some win peace who spend
The skill of words to sweeten despair
Of finding consolation where
Life has but one dark end;
Who, in rapt solitude, tell o'er
A tale, as lovely as forlore,
Into the midnight air.

RALPH HODGSON (b. 1871)

At the age of fifty-seven, Mr. Hodgson's poetical reputation rests on a volume of less than seventy small pages of large type. And yet no poet of the time has a more assured place. With the *Song of Honour*, *The Bull*, *The Bride*, and a dozen brief lyrics, the impact of his poetry once made is never forgotten. He has a curious, investigating mind, but it never liberates itself in verse until perfect lyric ease and rightness have been won. In recent years, Mr. Hodgson has spent some time in the

Japanese University of Sendai as lecturer in English literature, and it is difficult to imagine a guide more illuminating or less bound by pedantry. His admirers have long been hoping for new poems, but whether the hope is realised or not, the seventy pages will remain one of the chief claims of the early twentieth century in England to high poetic distinction.

TIME, YOU OLD GYPSY MAN[1]

Time, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

All things I'll give you
Will you be my guest,
Bells for your jennet
Of silver the best,
Goldsmiths shall beat you
A great golden ring,
Peacocks shall bow to you,
Little boys sing,
Oh, and sweet girls will
Festoon you with may,
Time, you old gipsy,
Why hasten away?
Last week in Babylon,
Last night in Rome,
Morning, and in the crush
Under Paul's dome;
Under Paul's dial
You tighten your rein —
Only a moment,
And off once again;
Off to some city

[1] From *Poems*. Copyright, 1917, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Now blind in the womb,
Off to another
Ere that's in the tomb.

Time, you old gipsy man,
Will you not stay,
Put up your caravan
Just for one day?

THE BRIDE[1]

The book was dull, its pictures
As leaden as its lore,
But one glad, happy picture
Made up for all and more;
'Twas that of you, sweet peasant,
Beside your grannie's door —
I never stopped so startled
Inside a book before.

Just so had I sat spell-bound,
Quite still with staring eyes,
If some great shiny hoopoe
Or moth of song-bird size
Had drifted to my window
And trailed its fineries —
Just so had I been startled,
Spelled with the same surprise.

It pictured you when springtime
In part had given place
But not surrendered wholly
To summer in your face;
When still your slender body
Was all a childish grace
Though woman's richest glories
Were building there apace.

[1] From *Poems*. Copyright, 1917, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

'Twas blissful so to see you,
Yet not without a sigh
I dwelt upon the people
Who saw you not as I,
But in your living sweetness,
Beneath your native sky;
Ah, bliss to be the people
When you went tripping by!

I sat there, thinking, wondering,
About your life and home,
The happy days behind you,
The happy days to come,
Your grannie in her corner,
Upstairs the little room
Where you wake up each morning
To dream all day — of Whom?

That ring upon your finger,
Who gave you that to wear?
What blushing smith or farm lad
Came stammering at your ear
A million-time-told story
No maid but burns to hear,
And went about his labours
Delighting in his dear!

I thought of you sweet lovers,
The things you say and do,
The pouts and tears and partings
And swearings to be true,
The kissings in the barley —
You brazens, both of you!
I nearly burst out crying
With thinking of you two.

It put me in a frenzy
Of pleasure nearly pain,

A host of blurry faces
'Gan shaping in my brain,
I shut my eyes to see them
Come forward clear and plain,
I saw them come full flower,
And blur and fade again.

One moment so I saw them,
One sovereign moment so,
A host of girlish faces
All happy and aglow
With Life and Love it dealt them
Before it laid them low,
A hundred years, a thousand,
Ten thousand years ago.

One moment so I saw them
Come back with time full tide,
The host of girls, your grannies,
Who lived and loved and died
To give your mouth its beauty,
Your soul its gentle pride,
Who wrestled with the ages
To give the world a bride.

A WOOD SONG[1]

Now one and all, you roses,
  Wake up, you lie too long!
This very morning closes
  The Nightingale his song;

Each from its olive chamber
  His babies every one
This very morning clamber
  Into the shining sun.

[1] From *Poems*. Copyright, 1917, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

You Slug-a-beds and Simples,
  Why will you so delay!
Dears, doff your olive wimples,
  And listen while you may.

Reason has moons, but moons not hers,
  Lie mirror'd on her sea,
Confounding her astronomers,
  But, O! delighting me.
. . . . . .
Babylon — where I go dreaming
When I weary of to-day,
Weary of a world grown grey.
. . . . . .
God loves an idle rainbow,
No less than labouring seas.

EVE [1]

Eve, with her basket, was
Deep in the bells and grass,
Wading in bells and grass
Up to her knees,
Picking a dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Down in the bells and grass
Under the trees.

Mute as a mouse in a
Corner the cobra lay,
Curled round a bough of the
Cinnamon tall. . . .
Now to get even and
Humble proud heaven and
Now was the moment or
Never at all.

[1] From *Poems*. Copyright, 1917, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

"Eva!" Each syllable
Light as a flower fell,
"Eva!" he whispered the
Wondering maid,
Soft as a bubble sung
Out of a linnet's lung,
Soft and most silverly
"Eva!" he said.

Picture that orchard sprite,
Eve, with her body white,
Supple and smooth to her
Slim finger tips,
Wondering, listening,
Listening, wondering,
Eve with a berry
Half-way to her lips.

Oh had our simple Eve
Seen through the make-believe!
Had she but known the
Pretender he was!
Out of the boughs he came,
Whispering still her name,
Tumbling in twenty rings
Into the grass.

Here was the strangest pair
In the world anywhere,
Eve in the bells and grass
Kneeling, and he
Telling his story low. . . .
Singing birds saw them go
Down the dark path to
The Blasphemous Tree.

Oh what a chatter when
Titmouse and Jenny Wren

Saw him successful and
Taking his leave!
How the birds rated him,
How they all hated him!
How they all pitied
Poor motherless Eve!

Picture her crying
Outside in the lane,
Eve, with no dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Haunting the gate of the
Orchard in vain. . . .
Picture the lewd delight
Under the hill to-night —
"Eva!" the toast goes round,
"Eva!" again.

LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE (b. 1881)

FEW poets of this age have worked on so large an intellectual scale, and he is not easy to represent in short measure. One of the leaders of the Georgian school, and a writer of verse plays that suggest how important a place he would have taken in the theatre had poetic drama been able to re-establish its hold on the stage. In recent years he has published very little poetry, but his admirers have reason to believe that this does not mean that he has written none. No work of our time has a more distinctive note. As Professor of English in the University of Leeds, a post that he has recently resigned for a chair in London University Mr. Abercrombie has enriched the study of English poetics with a remarkable series of essays, including *The Theory of Poetry*, *Principles of English Prosody*, and *The Idea of Great Poetry*.

EPILOGUE FROM EMBLEMS OF LOVE

What shall we do for Love these days?
How shall we make an altar-blaze
To smite the horny eyes of men
With the renown of our Heaven,
And to the unbelievers prove
Our service to our dear god, Love?
What torches shall we lift above
The crowd that pushes through the mire,
To amaze the dark heads with strange fire?
I should think I were much to blame,
If never I held some fragrant flame
Above the noises of the world,
And openly 'mid men's hurrying stares,
Worshipt before the sacred fears
That are like flashing curtains furl'd
Across the presence of our lord Love.
Nay, would that I could fill the gaze
Of the whole earth with some great praise
Made in a marvel for men's eyes,
Some tower of glittering masonries,
Therein such a spirit flourishing
Men should see what my heart can sing:
All that Love hath done to me
Built into a stone, a visible glee;
Marble carried to gleaming height
As moved aloft by inward delight;
Not as with toil of chisels hewn,
But seeming poised in a mighty tune.
For of all those who have been known
To lodge with our kind host, the sun,
I envy one for just one thing:
In Cordova of the Moors
There dwelt a passion-minded King,
Who set great bands of marble-hewers
To fashion his heart's thanksgiving
In a tall palace, shapen so

All the wondering world might know
The joy he had of his Moorish lass.
His love, that brighter and larger was
Than the starry places, into firm stone
He sent, as if the stone were glass
Fired and into beauty blown.
  Solemn and invented gravely
In its bulk the fabric stood,
Even as Love, that trusteth bravely
In its own exceeding good
To be better than the waste
Of time's devices; grandly spaced,
Seriously the fabric stood.
But over it all a pleasure went
Of carven delicate ornament,
Wreathing up like ravishment,
Mentioning in sculptures twined
The blitheness Love hath in his mind;
And like delighted senses were
The windows, and the columns there
Made the following sight to ache
As the heart that did them make.
Well I can see that shining song
Flowering there, the upward throng
Of porches, pillars and windowed walls,
Spires like piercing panpipe calls,
Up to the roof's snow-cloud flight;
All glancing in the Spanish light
White as water of arctic tides,
Save an amber dazzle on sunny sides.
You had said, the radiant sheen
Of the palace might have been
A young god's fantasy, ere he came
His serious worlds and suns to frame;
Such an immortal passion
Quiver'd among the slim hewn stone.
And in the nights it seemed a jar

Cut in the substance of a star,
Wherein a wine, that will be poured
Some time for feasting Heaven, was stored.
  But within this fretted shell,
The wonder of Love made visible,
The King a private gentle mood
There placed, of pleasant quietude.
For right amidst there was a court,
Where always muskèd silences
Listened to water and to trees;
And herbage of all fragrant sort, —
Lavender, lad's-love, rosemary,
Basil, tansy, centaury, —
Was the grass of that orchard, hid
Love's amazements all amid.
Jarring the air with rumour cool,
Small fountains played into a pool
With sound as soft as the barley's hiss
When its beard just sprouting is;
Whence a young stream, that trod on moss,
Prettily rimpled the court across.
And in the pool's clear idleness,
Moving like dreams through happiness,
Shoals of small bright fishes were;
In and out weed-thickets bent
Perch and carp, and sauntering went
With mounching jaws and eyes a-stare;
Or on a lotus leaf would crawl,
A brinded loach to bask and sprawl,
Tasting the warm sun ere it dipt
Into the water; but quick as fear
Back his shining brown head slipt
To crouch on the gravel of his lair,
Where the cooled sunbeams broke in wrack,
Spilt shatter'd gold about his back.
  So within that green-veiled air,
Within that white-walled quiet, where

Innocent water thought aloud, —
Childish prattle that must make
The wise sunlight with laughter shake
On the leafage overbowed, —
Often the King and his love-lass
Let the delicious hours pass.
All the outer world could see
Graved and sawn amazingly
Their love's delighted riotise,
Fixt in marble for all men's eyes;
But only these twain could abide
In the cool peace that withinside
Thrilling desire and passion dwelt;
They only knew the still meaning spelt
By Love's flaming script, which is
God's word written in ecstasies.
And where is now that palace gone,
All the magical skill'd stone,
All the dreaming towers wrought
By Love as if no more than thought
The unresisting marble was?
How could such a wonder pass?
Ah, it was but built in vain
Against the stupid horns of Rome,
That pusht down into the common loam
The loveliness that shone in Spain.
But we have raised it up again!
A loftier palace, fairer far,
Is ours, and one that fears no war.
Safe in marvellous walls we are;
Wondering sense like builded fires,
High amazement of desires,
Delight and certainty of love,
Closing around, roofing above
Our unapproacht and perfect hour
Within the splendours of love's power.

EPITAPH

THESE, who desired to live, went out to death:
Dark underground their golden youth is lying.
We live: and there is brightness in our breath
They could not know — the splendour of their dying.

RYTON FIRS

DEAR boys, they've killed our woods: the ground
Now looks ashamed, to be shorn so bare;
Naked lank ridge and brooding mound
Seem shivering cowed in the April air.

They well may starve, hills that have been
So richly and so sturdily fleeced!
Who made this upland, once so green,
Crouch comfortless, like an ill-used beast?

There was a fool who had pulled fierce faces
At his photographer thirty years;
He swore, Now I'll put you through your paces,
Jaegers, Uhlans, and Grenadiers!

Was he to blame? Or the looking-glass
That taught him his moustachioes?
How could that joke for an Attila pass?
Who was to blame? Nobody knows.

He but let loose the frantic mood
That toppled Europe down pell-mell;
It rippled against our quietude,
And Ryton Firs, like Europe, fell.

Now the axe hews, the bill-hook lops.
The owls have flown to Clifford's Mesne,
The foxes found another copse;
The badger trotted to Mitcheldean.

But where is our cool pine-fragrance fled?
Where now our sun-fleckt loitering hours,
Wading in yellow or azure or red,
Daffodil, bluebell, foxglove flowers?

Where is our spring's woodland delight
To scatter her small green fires like dew?
Our riding, a blade of golden light
Cleaving our summer shade in two?

The wind comes noiseless down the hill
That once might just have left the sea,
And would our Glostershire windows fill
With a sound like the shores of Anglesey.

The poor trees, all undignified,
Mere logs, that could so sing and gleam,
Laid out in long rows side by side
Across the sloping ground, might seem

A monstrous march of rugged brown
Caterpillars, gigantically
Over the hill-top swarming down
To browse their own lopt greenery.

The last we saw of our lovely friends!
Cannibal grubs! — Then came the wains
To cart them off; their story ends
Not upright still in the winds and the rains

(As tall trees hope to end) at sea,
In graces drest that whiter shine
Than glittering winter: no, but to be
Props in a Glamorgan mine.

So come: where once we loved their shade,
We'll take their ghost an offering now.

Here is an image I have made:
Guarini and Tasso showed me how.
. . . . . .

Ryton Firs are alive again! And I
In the heart of them am happy once again!

All round the knoll, on days of quietest air,
Secrets are being told: if it were high wind,
And the talk of the trees as loud as roaring drums,
Still 'twould be secrets, shouted instead of whisper'd.

There must have been a warning given once:
"No tree, on pain of withering and sawfly,
To reach the slimmest of his snaky toes
Into this mounded sward and rumple it;
All trees stand back: taboo is on this soil." —

The trees have always scrupulously obeyed.
The grass, that elsewhere grows as best it may
Under the larches, countable long nesh blades,
Here in clear sky pads the ground thick and close
As wool upon a Southdown wether's back;
And as in Southdown wool, your hand must sink
Up to the wrist before it finds the roots.
A bed for summer afternoons, this grass;
But in the spring, not too softly entangling
For lively feet to dance on, when the green
Flashes with daffodils. From Marcle way,
From Dymock, Kempley, Newent, Bromesberrow,
Redmarley, all the meadowland daffodils seem
Running in golden tides to Ryton Firs,
To make the knot of steep little wooden hills
Their brightest show: O bella età de l'oro!
Now I breathe you again, my woods of Ryton:
Not only golden with your daffodil light
Lying in pools on the loose dusky ground
Beneath the larches, tumbling in broad rivers

Down sloping grass under the cherry trees
And birches: but among your branches clinging
A mist of that Ferrara-gold I first
Loved in those easy hours you made so green.
And hark! you are full of voices now! as if
Ferrara day-dreams had come back to earth
In Glostershire, transforming to a troop
Of lads and lasses, and presently a dance,
Those mornings when your alleys of long light
And your brown rosin-scented shadows were
Enchanted with the laughter of my boys.
. . . . . .

"Follow my heart, my dancing feet,
Dance as blithe as my heart can beat:
Dancing alone can understand
What a heavenly way we pass
Treading the green and golden land,
Daffodillies and grass."

"I had a song, too, on my road,
But mine was in my eyes;
For Malvern Hills were with me all the way,
Singing loveliest visible melodies
Blue as a south-sea bay;
And ruddy as wine of France
Breadths of new-turn'd ploughland under them glowed.
'Twas my heart then must dance
To dwell in my delight;
No need to sing when all in song my sight
Moved over hills so musically made
And with such colour played. —
And only yesterday it was I saw
Veil'd in streamers of grey wavering smoke
My shapely Malvern Hills.
That was the last hail-storm to trouble spring:
He came in gloomy haste,
Pusht in front of the white clouds quietly basking,

In such a hurry he tript against the hills
And stumbling forward spilt over his shoulders
All his baggage held,
Streaking downpour of hail.
Then fled dismayed, and the sun in golden glee
And the high white clouds laught down his dusky ghost."

"For all that's left of winter
Is moisture in the ground.
When I came down the valley last, the sun
Just thawed the grass and made me gentle turf,
But still the frost was bony underneath.
Now moles take burrowing jaunts abroad, and ply
Their shovelling hands in earth
As nimbly as the strokes
Of a swimmer in a long dive under water.
The meadows in the sun are twice as green
For all the scatter of fresh red mounded earth,
The mischief of the moles:
No dullish red, Glostershire earth new-delved
In April! And I think shows fairest where
These rummaging small rogues have been at work
If you will look the way the sunlight slants
Making the grass one great green gem of light,
Bright earth, crimson and even
Scarlet, everywhere tracks
The rambling underground affairs of moles:
Though 'tis but kestrel-bay
Looking against the sun."

"But here's the happiest light can lie on ground,
Grass sloping under trees
Alive with yellow shine of daffodils!
If quicksilver were gold,
And troubled pools of it shaking in the sun,
It were not such a fancy of bickering gleam

As Ryton daffodils when the air but stirs.
And all the miles and miles of meadowland
The spring makes golden ways,
Lead here; for here the gold
Grows brightest for our eyes,
And for our hearts lovelier even than love.
So here, each spring, our daffodil festival."

"How smooth and quick the year
Spins me the seasons round!
How many days have slid across my mind
Since we had snow pitying the frozen ground!
Then winter sunshine cheered
The bitter skies; the snow,
Reluctantly obeying lofty winds,
Drew off in shining clouds,
Wishing it still might love
With its white mercy the cold earth beneath.
But when the beautiful ground
Lights upward all the air,
Noon thaws the frozen eaves,
And makes the rime on post and paling stream
Silvery blue smoke in the golden day.
And soon from loaded trees in noiseless woods
The snows slip thudding down,
Scattering in their trail
Bright icy sparkles through the glittering air;
And the fir-branches, patiently bent so long,
Sigh as they lift themselves to rights again.
Then warm moist hours steal in,
Such as can draw the year's
First fragrance from the sap of cherry wood
Or from the leaves of budless violets;
And travellers in lanes
Catch the hot tawny smell
Reynard's damp fur left as he sneakt marauding
Across from gap to gap;

And in the larch woods on the highest boughs
The long-eared owls like grey cats sitting still
Peer down to quizz the passengers below."

"Light has killed the winter and all dark dreams,
Now winds live all in light,
Light has come down to earth and blossoms here,
And we have golden minds.
From out the long shade of a road high-bankt,
I came on shelving fields;
And from my feet cascading,
Streaming down the land,
Flickering lavish of daffodils flowed and fell;
Like sunlight on a water thrill'd with haste,
Such clear pale quivering flame,
But a flame even more marvellously yellow.
And all the way to Ryton here I walkt
Ankle-deep in light.
It was as if the world had just begun;
And in a mind new-made
Of shadowless delight
My spirit drank my flashing senses in,
And gloried to be made
Of young mortality.
No darker joy than this
Golden amazement now
Shall dare intrude into our dazzling lives:
Stain were it now to know
Mists of sweet warmth and deep delicious colour,
Those lovable accomplices that come
Befriending languid hours."

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON (b. 1878)

Is one of the very few living writers of eminence who have devoted their working lives exclusively to poetry. A short editorial association in London with a literary

magazine excepted, he has lived quietly in various secluded corners of England, and for nearly thirty years has added one volume of verse to another. His earliest productions were plainly if pleasantly derivative, but the publication of *Daily Bread* in 1910 gave him rank as one of the most original poets of his time, and since then his very rich vein has yielded a remarkable production of dramatic lyrics that are of his own decisive minting. Psychologically his world may not be a very extensive one, but it is very vital, and its features cannot be confused with those of any other. Though Mr. Gibson's horizons may not be very far flung — in the sense that Mr. Hardy's are, for example — few poets of this age have more surely created a *cosmos* of their own. To discover his full quality we have to be familiar with such longer poems as *Hoops* and *Bloodybush Edge*, but his mastery of the short lyric is often asserted. His verse dramas of English peasant and artisan life have found some favour on the experimental stage, and he is another of the Georgian poets who might have served an imaginative age of the theatre.

THE ICE CART[1]

Perched on my city office-stool
I watched with envy, while a cool
And lucky carter handled ice . . .
And I was wandering in a trice,
Far from the gay and grimy heat
Of that intolerable street,
O'er sapphire berg and emerald floe,
Beneath the still, cold ruby glow
Of everlasting Polar night,
Bewildered by the queer half-light,
Until I stumbled, unawares,
Upon a creek where big white bears

[1] From *Collected Poems*. Copyright, 1917, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Plunged headlong down with flourished heels,
And floundered after shining seals
Through shivering seas of blinding blue.
And as I watched them, ere I knew,
I'd stripped, and I was swimming, too,
Among the seal-pack, young and hale,
And thrusting on with threshing tail,
With twist and twirl and sudden leap
Through crackling ice and salty deep —
Diving and doubling with my kind,
Until, at last, we left behind
Those big white, blundering bulks of death,
And lay, at length, with panting breath
Upon a far untravelled floe,
Beneath a gentle drift of snow —
Snow drifting gently, fine and white,
Out of the endless Polar night,
Falling and falling evermore
Upon that far untravelled shore,
Till I was buried fathoms deep
Beneath that cold, white drifting sleep —
Sleep drifting deep,
Deep drifting sleep . . .

The carter cracked a sudden whip:
I clutched my stool with startled grip,
Awakening to the grimy heat
Of that intolerable street.

GERANIUMS [1]

Stuck in a bottle on the window-sill,
In the cold gaslight burning gaily red
Against the luminous blue of London night,
These flowers are mine: while somewhere out of sight
In some black-throated alley's stench and heat,

[1] From *Collected Poems*. Copyright, 1917, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Oblivious of the racket of the street,
A poor old weary woman lies in bed.
Broken with lust and drink, blear-eyed and ill,
Her battered bonnet nodding on her head,
From a dark arch she clutched my sleeve and said:
"I've sold no bunch to-day, nor touched a bite . . .
Son, buy six-pennorth: and 'twill mean a bed."

So blazing gaily red
Against the luminous deeps
Of starless London night,
They burn for my delight:
While somewhere, snug in bed,
A worn old woman sleeps.

And yet to-morrow will these blooms be dead
With all their lively beauty; and to-morrow
May end the light lusts and the heavy sorrow
Of that old body with the nodding head.
The last oath muttered, the last pint drained deep,
She'll sink, as Cleopatra sank, to sleep;
No need to barter blossoms for a bed.

SOLWAY FORD [1]

He greets you with a smile from friendly eyes
But never speaks, nor rises from his bed:
Beneath the green night of the sea he lies,
The whole world's waters weighing on his head.

The empty wain made slowly over the sand;
And he, with hands in pockets, by the side
Was trudging, deep in dream, the while he scanned
With blue, unseeing eyes the far-off tide:
When, stumbling in a hole, with startled neigh
His young horse reared; and, snatching at the rein,
He slipped: the wheels crushed on him as he lay;

[1] From *Collected Poems*. Copyright, 1917, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Then tilting over him, the lumbering wain
Turned turtle as the plunging beast broke free,
And made for home: and pinioned and half-dead
He lay, and listened to the far-off sea;
And seemed to hear it surging overhead
Already: though 'twas full an hour or more
Until high-tide, when Solway's shining flood
Should sweep the shallow firth from shore to shore.
He felt a salty tingle in his blood;
And seemed to stifle, drowning. Then again,
He knew that he must lie a lingering while
Before the sea might close above his pain,
Although the advancing waves had scarce a mile
To travel, creeping nearer, inch by inch,
With little runs and sallies over the sand.
Cooped in the dark, he felt his body flinch
From each chill wave as it drew nearer hand.
He saw the froth of each oncoming crest,
And felt the tugging of the ebb and flow,
And waves already breaking over his breast,
Though still far-off they murmured, faint and low,
Yet creeping nearer, inch by inch; and now
He felt the cold drench of the drowning wave,
And the salt cold of death on lips and brow;
And sank, and sank . . . while still, as in a grave,
In the close dark beneath the crushing cart,
He lay, and listened to the far-off sea.
Wave after wave was knocking at his heart,
And swishing, swishing, swishing ceaselessly
About the wain — cool waves that never reached
His cracking lips, to slake his hell-hot thirst . . .
Shrill in his ear a startled barn-owl screeched . . .
He smelt the smell of oil-cake . . . when there burst
Through the big barn's wide-open door, the sea —
The whole sea sweeping on him with a roar . . .
He clutched a falling rafter, dizzily . . .
Then sank through drowning deeps, to rise no more.
Down, ever down, a hundred years he sank

Through cold green death, ten thousand fathom deep.
His fiery lips deep draughts of cold sea drank
That filled his body with strange icy sleep,
Until he felt no longer that numb ache —
The dead-weight lifted from his legs at last:
And yet, he gazed with wondering eyes awake
Up the green grassy gloom through which he passed:
And saw, far overhead, the keels of ships
Grow small and smaller, dwindling out of sight;
And watched the bubbles rising from his lips;
And silver salmon swimming in green night;
And queer big, yellow skate with scarlet fins
And emerald eyes and fiery-flashing tails:
Enormous eels with purple-spotted skins;
And mammoth unknown fish with sapphire scales
That bore down on him with red jaws agape,
Like yawning furnaces of blinding heat;
And when it seemed to him as though escape
From those hell-mouths were hopeless, his bare feet
Touched bottom: and he lay down in his place
Among the dreamless legion of the drowned,
The calm of deeps unsounded on his face,
And calm within his heart; while all around
Upon the midmost ocean's crystal floor
The naked bodies of dead seamen lay,
Dropped, sheer and clean, from hubbub, brawl and roar,
To peace, too deep for any tide to sway.

. . . . . .

The little waves were lapping round the cart
Already, when they rescued him from death.
Life cannot touch the quiet of his heart
To joy or sorrow, as, with easy breath,
And smiling lips, upon his back he lies,
And never speaks, nor rises from his bed;
Gazing through those green glooms with happy eyes,
While gold and sapphire fish swim overhead.

THE VOICE[1]

At sunrise, swimming out to sea,
I heard a clear voice calling me
From the little wood whose branches lean
Over the restless water —
I heard, half-dreaming that I heard
The voice of some enchanted bird;
And glancing back, among the green
I saw my little daughter.

When I must breast the stiller sea
That stretches everlastingly
Beneath the starless unknown night,
The darkness round me falling,
May it be given me to hear
Life calling me as crystal-clear —
To glance back once through failing light
And answer that sweet calling.

THE GORSE[2]

In dream, again within the clean, cold hell
Of glazed and aching silence he was trapped;
And, closing in, the blank walls of his cell
Crushed stifling on him . . . when the bracken snapped,
Caught in his clutching fingers; and he lay
Awake upon his back among the fern,
With free eyes travelling the wide blue day,
Unhindered, unremembering; while a burn
Tinkled and gurgled somewhere out of sight,
Unheard of him; till suddenly aware
Of its cold music, shivering in the light,
He raised himself, and with far-ranging stare
Looked all about him: and with dazed eyes wide

[1] From *I Heard A Sailor.* Copyright, 1925, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

[2] From *Borderlands and Thoroughfares.* Copyright, 1914, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Saw, still as in a numb, unreal dream,
Black figures scouring a far hill-side,
With now and then a sunlit rifle's gleam;
And knew the hunt was hot upon his track:
Yet hardly seemed to mind, somehow, just then . . .
But kept on wondering why they looked so black
On that hot hill-side, all those little men
Who scurried round like beetles — twelve, all told . . .
He counted them twice over; and began
A third time reckoning them, but could not hold
His starved wits to the business, while they ran
So brokenly, and always stuck at "five" . . .

And "One, two, three, four, five," a dozen times
He muttered. . . . "Can you catch a fish alive?"
Sang mocking echoes of old nursery rhymes
Through the strained, tingling hollow of his head.
And now, almost remembering, he was stirred
To pity them; and wondered if they'd fed
Since he had, or if, ever since they'd heard
Two nights ago the sudden signal-gun
That raised alarm of his escape, they too
Had fasted in the wilderness, and run
With nothing but the thirsty wind to chew,
And nothing in their bellies but a fill
Of cold peat-water, till their heads were light . . .

The crackling of a rifle on the hill
Rang in his ears: and stung to headlong flight,
He started to his feet; and through the brake
He plunged in panic, heedless of the sun
That burned his cropped head to a red-hot ache
Still racked with crackling echoes of the gun.

Then suddenly the sun-enkindled fire
Of gorse upon the moor-top caught his eye:
And that gold glow held all his heart's desire,

As, like a witless, flame-bewildered fly,
He blundered towards the league-wide yellow glaze,
And tumbled headlong on the spikes of bloom;
And rising, bruised and bleeding and adaze,
Struggled through clutching spines; the dense, sweet fume
Of nutty, acrid scent like poison stealing
Through his hot blood; the bristling yellow glare
Spiking his eyes with fire, till he went reeling,
Stifled and blinded, on — and did not care
Though he were taken — wandering round and round,
"Jerusalem the Golden" quavering shrill,
Changing his tune to "Tommy Tiddler's Ground":
Till, just a lost child on that dazzling hill,
Bewildered in a glittering golden maze
Of stinging scented fire, he dropped, quite done,
A shriveling wisp within a world ablaze
Beneath a blinding sky, one blaze of sun.

JOHN DRINKWATER (b. 1882)

Associated with Barry Jackson in the formation of the company that developed into the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, in and for which his plays up to and including "Abraham Lincoln" were written. Published *New Numbers* in conjunction with Lascelles Abercrombie, Rupert Brooke and Wilfrid Wilson Gibson, and was a contributor to the five volumes of Mr. Marsh's *Georgian Poetry*. In addition to his poetry and plays, he has written various critical studies, including volumes on Byron, Charles II, and Charles James Fox.

MOONLIT APPLES

At the top of the house the apples are laid in rows,
And the skylight lets the moonlight in, and those
Apples are deep-sea apples of green. There goes
A cloud on the moon in the autumn night.

A mouse in the wainscot scratches, and scratches, and
then
There is no sound at the top of the house of men
Or mice; and the cloud is blown and the moon again
Dapples the apples with deep-sea light.

They are lying in rows there, under the gloomy beams;
On the sagging floor; they gather the silver streams
Out of the moon, those moonlit apples of dreams,
And quiet is the steep stair under.

In the corridors under there is nothing but sleep.
And stiller than ever on orchard boughs they keep
Tryst with the moon, and deep is the silence, deep
On moon-washed apples of wonder.

PRELUDE

Though black the night, I know upon the sky,
A little paler now, if clouds were none,
The stars would be. Husht now the thickets lie,
And now the birds are moving one by one, —
A note — and now from bush to bush it goes —
A prelude — now victorious light along
The west will come till every bramble glows
With wash of sunlit dew shaken in song.
Shaken in song; O heart, be ready now,
Cold in your night, be ready now to sing.
Dawn as it wakes the sleeping bird on bough
Shall summon you to instant reckoning, —
She is your dawn, O heart, — sing, till the night
Of death shall come, the gospel of her light.

GOLD

There is a castle on a hill,
So far into the sky,
That birds that from the valley-beds

Up to the turrets fly,
Climbing towards the sun, can feel
The clouds go tumbling by.

But always far above the clouds
The sun is shining there,
It shines for ever on those walls;
And the great boughs that bear
Harvests of never fading fruit
Are golden everywhere.

Who journeys to that castled crest
Finds, with his journey done,
All ages and all colours in
Cascades of light that run
Over the broad weirs of the air
For ever from the sun.

Two things are silver; flower of plum
When April yet is cold;
And willowed floods that of the moon
Quiet leases hold.
That castle in the sky alone
Of living things is gold.

Between unfathomable blue
And the bright belts of green,
Midway the plains of heaven and earth,
Rock-borne it stands between
Woods and the sky, a golden world
Where only gold is seen.

Old carvers in the stone have cut
Forests and wraths and herds,
And these are gold: the dials tell
The sun in golden words;
The very jackdaws, from the towers
Wheeling, are golden birds.

The minting of the sun is on
The gravel everywhere,
The yellow walls are fleeces washed
In pools of sunny air,
That coming to that castle place
All men are Jasons there.

Trancelike to stand upon that hill
When the deep summer sings,
Gold-clad, gold-hearted, and gold-voiced,
And sings and sings and sings,
Is as to wait a rising world
In flight of golden wings.

And I have walked with love that way,
And on that golden crest
The sun was happy for my love,
For she is golden-tressed,
Red-gold, that of all golden things
The great sun marks for best.

O golden castle of the sky,
Hereafter gold can be
Only your image when the sun
Transfigured her for me
Till she was golden-clouded Jove,
And I her Danaë.

Hereafter in the chambered night
When linkèd love is told,
One thought shall spare to climb that hill
Into the sunbright fold,
For a great summer noon when love
Was gold, and gold, and gold.

MYSTERY

THINK not that mystery has place
In the obscure and veilèd face,
Or when the midnight watches are
Unaccompanied of moon or star,
Or where the fields and forests lie
Enfolded from the loving eye
By fogs rebellious to the sun,
Or when the poet's rhymes are spun
From dreams that even in his own
Imagining are half-unknown.

These are not mystery, but mere
Conditions that deny the clear
Reality that lies behind
The weak, unspeculative mind,
Beyond contagions of the air
And screens of beauty everywhere,
The brooding and tormented sky,
The hesitation of an eye.

Look rather when the landscapes glow
Through crystal distances as though
The forty shires of England spread
Into one vision harvested,
Or when the moonlit waters lie
In silver cold lucidity;
Those countenances search that bear
Witness to very character,
And listen to the song that weighs
A life's adventure in a phrase —
These are the founts of wonder, these
The plainer miracles to please
The brain that reads the world aright;
Here is the mystery of light.

GORDON BOTTOMLEY (b. 1874)

A POET who has added a strongly personal note to the Pre-Raphaelite tradition, and shown how beautifully the mood of a past generation may be turned to original uses. Mr. Bottomley has devoted a secluded life to an art that shows his loving care in every line, and while everything he writes is intellectually robust, there is a large detachment in its manner that speaks of a mind secure against the caprice of fashion. From his Lancashire hillside he has seen the world very serenely, but none the less passionately.

IN JANUARY

O SHEPHERD, out upon the snow,
What lambs are newly born? . . .
I see his long, long shadow go
Across the fields of morn.

Ere dawn the snow-light in the room
Awoke me, and I saw
A pallid earth, a cloudy gloom,
A shape that stirred my awe.

I know the clear untrodden snows
That hide the Winter wheat;
The greyer fields wherein he goes
Are grey with pitting feet.

He feels not how I watch him creep,
He thinks he is alone;
He searches for the heavy sheep
Each windward hedge of stone.

I keep my bed in weariness
When workers have gone forth,

I watch that silent man grow less
Into the snow-packed North;

And men have died in this old room
Through thrice a hundred years
Who saw the shepherd in the gloom,
The shape that never nears.

Briefly I watch; but then I go,
The room will know me not;
Yet from my window, o'er the snow,
When I am well forgot

Shall unknown men look forth to scan
Each far, unchanging tree,
And see a dark and lonely man
Still creeping agelessly.

GRUACH

Dedication to C. H. S. and C. S. R.

Now, when my life is more than half consumed,
And my yet steady flame gathers its force
More to aspire before the vague, last flare
(That lightens nothing) gutters in the night-wind,
Upon the midway ridge of my short days
I turn; I would not know what is to come,
Down the far slope of the withdrawing wave;
I would remain at this conspiring height,
Whose upward motion seemed my very own, and keep,
Keep mine the swift discoveries of life,
The passionate, the unexpected moments
That now as I look back are all I have,
All I have longed for, all I have to lose,
All, all I shall regret when I must leave them.

And first, after the daily use of love
That is not to be told, the common joy

Of life shared with the natural, earth-born forces,
I think of him who from Italian seed
Was born an English man, him who renewed
By moody English ways, at English tension,
The lost Italian vision, the passionate
Vitality of art more rich than life,
More real than the day's reality.
Before I knew his name and his great acts
Of true creation done on God's behalf,
Within himself the assurance of a God,
I lived in the stale darkness of my kind;
And it was his sole deed that I have known
The power of loveliness, the power of truth,
And of imagination that concentres
Life into more than one life ever gave.
By nameless lovers, lovers with great names,
By fabulous ladies dreamed and almost seen,
By Dante's lost love Beatrice and his own
More wonderful and more desirable
Lost love Elizabeth, created once
For him, and once by him in recollection;
And by his rarer light; I learned to live.

The first amazement as of a spirit seen,
When in the arts that man has perfected
Beauty is known, is not maintained. The past
Must be resumed in each of us, to each
Deliver its attainment and its hope;
But every man to his own generation
Nearer approaches than to father or child,
And apprehends more intimately by it
The reality of vision and life; and it
More certainly divines the truth of him:
And so, when I had turned the last bright page
Of that dead painter of a keener life,
And felt that the dark mirror of his vision
Was broken, and knew I should not see again

Any new shape of that mysterious beauty
(Which by a heart-ache still brings back my youth),
I kindled with more life because I came
On the same miracle of enhanced life
Continued and renewed in acts of yours.

Upon the Dial of the vanished Vale
Were counted chosen fortunate hours alone;
And there began the invention and the mood
That by the shapes of colour and air and light
Has made a life men might begin to-day,
Yet fit for a lovelier earth that is to be,
Out of the England that is here and now —
A region better than dreams, a dawn-lit state,
Wherein the daily Greece Theocritus
Through his half-open door in the same way
Shews us is mingled with succeeding life,
Siena, Avalon, and the Western place
Where Deirdre learned to move and look at men,
And with the garden of living ladies where
A silvery bearer of a cyclamen
Looked at her painter and shall be remembered
With the Gioconda; and in this state I found
Assurance that romance is wisdom and truth.
And in those vanished hours of the rich Vale
One in whose birth England and Italy
A second time had kissed was also known;
One who received my first enchanter's force
Of vision to create a keener life;
In whom the knowledge of materials
Leads to design as form leads into colour.
Wherever human days and acts have burned
By breeding and great race to salient height
Of suffering or rapture or quivering
Domination they are subject to his mind:
He has made manifest the shape of Silence:
By beings that never were, centaur and sphinx,

He has made clear the composition of life,
The nature of vitality: and by him
I have understood that I desire from art
And from creation not repeated things
Of every day, not the mean content
Or discontent of average helpless souls,
Not passionate abstraction of loveliness,
But unmatched moments and exceptional deeds
And all that cannot happen every day
And rare experience of earth's chosen men
In which I cannot, by my intermitting
And narrow powers, share unless they are held
Sublimated and embodied in beauty.

Dear Masters, in the acknowledgement of debt
There may be grace; but not enough for payment.
I write your names before this meditation
On an old theme, a birthright of our race,
Because I have put therein all that is mine;
And so I give it to you, as I would give
All that is mine to you, recognisance
Of what I owe and have no means to pay.
You love the arts so well that you preserve,
Within your treasure-house that seems to rise
In clarity and in tranquillity
Above the impermanence of time, true works
That still are less than those you do yourselves:
Content me by receiving this among them
For your own sake and that of certain dead —
And, most, for the two friends of Paragon
Who sought perfection and achieved far more;
And by my poem's admittance recognise
The duty that I offer, I too your friend.

ATLANTIS

What poets sang in Atlantis? Who can tell
The epics of Atlantis or their names?

The sea hath its own murmurs, and sounds not
The secrets of its silences beneath,
And knows not any cadences enfolded
When the last bubbles of Atlantis broke
Among the quieting of its heaving floor.

O, years and tides and leagues and all their billows
Can alter not man's knowledge of men's hearts —
While trees and rocks and clouds include our being
We know the epics of Atlantis still:
A hero gave himself to lesser men,
Who first misunderstood and murdered him,
And then misunderstood and worshipped him;
A woman was lovely and men fought for her,
Towns burnt for her, and men put men in bondage,
But she put lengthier bondage on them all;
A wanderer toiled among all the isles
That fleck this turning star of shifting sea,
Or lonely purgatories of the mind,
In longing for his home or his lost love.

Poetry is founded on the hearts of men:
Though in Nirvana or the Heavenly courts
The principle of beauty shall persist,
Its body of poetry, as the body of man,
Is but a terrene form, a terrene use,
That swifter being will not loiter with;
And, when mankind is dead and the world cold,
Poetry's immortality will pass.

HAROLD MONRO (b. 1879)

A POET whose later work shows a remarkable advance beyond his early promise. From somewhat laboured and more than usually derivative beginnings he has matured into a poet of very distinctive mood and manner. Closely analytical in the detail both of his thought and

his technique, he writes for the most part with a hesitancy that is very attractive to speculative minds. His lighter lyrics have a fluent charm, but the intellectual self-consciousness that marks some of his more philosophical poetry may be a difficulty for some readers. When a poet, however, justifies his own methods as surely as Mr. Monro does in nearly all his later work, he has every right to call the tune. Mr. Monro, not content with making his own poetry, has greatly served his fellow-poets by founding and for many years presiding over the famous Poetry Bookshop in London, among the other activities of which has been the publication of the five volumes of *Georgian Poetry*.

REAL PROPERTY

Tell me about that harvest field.
Oh! Fifty acres of living bread.
The colour has painted itself in my heart.
The form is patterned in my head.

So now I take it everywhere;
See it whenever I look round;
Hear it growing through every sound,
Know exactly the sound it makes —
Remembering, as one must all day,
Under the pavement the live earth aches.

Trees are at the farther end,
Limes all full of the mumbling bee:
So there must be a harvest field
Whenever one thinks of a linden tree.

A hedge is about it, very tall,
Hazy and cool, and breathing sweet.
Round paradise is such a wall
And all the day, in such a way,
In paradise the wild birds call.

You only need to close your eyes
And go within your secret mind,
And you'll be into paradise:
I've learnt quite easily to find
Some linden trees and drowsy bees,
A tall sweet hedge with the corn behind.

I will not have that harvest mown;
I'll keep the corn and leave the bread.
I've bought that field; it's now my own:
I've fifty acres in my head.
I take it as a dream to bed.
I carry it about all day. . . .

Sometimes when I have found a friend
I give a blade of corn away.

A FLOWER IS LOOKING THROUGH THE GROUND

A FLOWER is looking through the ground,
Blinking at the April weather;
Now a child has seen the flower:
Now they go and play together.

Now it seems the flower will speak,
And will call the child its brother —
But, oh strange forgetfulness! –
They don't recognise each other.

MAN CARRYING BALE

THE tough hand closes gently on the load;
  Out of the mind, a voice
Calls "Lift!" and the arms, remembering well their work,
  Lengthen and pause for help.

Then a slow ripple flows along the body,
While all the muscles call to one another:
"Lift!" and the bulging bale
Floats like a butterfly in June.

So moved the earliest carrier of bales,
And the same watchful sun
Glowed through his body feeding it with light.
So will the last one move,
And halt, and dip his head, and lay his load
Down, and the muscles will relax and tremble . . .
Earth, you designed your man
Beautiful both in labour, and repose.

ROMANTIC FOOL

Romantic fool who cannot speak!

You are distant like a white cold cloud.
You pasture on the April sky.

I meet you with my head half bowed,
And wonder if you wonder why.
There has not been a single day
My eyes have dared look straight your way,
Or mix themselves with yours in play.

Your beauty fills my flesh with fear:
I flinch, as I have always done,
When loveliness became too near.
You dazzle me with your bright sun.
Supposing I should say a word
Just whispered lowly, as a bird,
While passing, and you smiled — and heard.

O then I fear that I might spring,
Utter some unearthly cry,

But drop my clipped and awkward wing,
Dumb, while you stared, and slowly I
Should have to pass your beauty by,
Becoming, like that bird, I think,
Beady-small, but vision-clear —
The epochs in between a sleep
Devoted to your being near,
Though your known face between my dreams
Is absent always, as it seems,
And I remain through week and week
Romantic fool who cannot speak.

RUPERT BROOKE (1887–1915)

As a young man one of the most brilliant and noted figures of his generation. The son of a House Master at Rugby, he left that school to take a Fellowship at King's, Cambridge, in 1913, join the Royal Naval Division in 1914, and die at Scyros in the Ægean in 1915, while with the Dardanelles Expeditionary Force. He was closely associated with Mr. Edward Marsh in the conception of the first volume of *Georgian Poetry*, and much of his most celebrated verse, including the war sonnets, first appeared in *New Numbers*, a small quarterly publication in which he co-operated with Lascelles Abercrombie, John Drinkwater, and Wilfrid Wilson Gibson. The story of his life has been admirably told by Mr. Marsh, with liberal extracts from his very characteristic letters, of which a larger volume, *Letters from America*, appeared separately. His verse, traditional but always supple in form, is full of a young poet's romantic sensitiveness and intellectual curiosity. He had a daring mind, but he was never too proud, or too silly, to acknowledge his ancestry.

THE SOLDIER

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

THE OLD VICARAGE, GRANTCHESTER

(Café des Westens, Berlin, May 1912)

Just now the lilac is in bloom,
All before my little room;
And in my flower-beds, I think,
Smile the carnation and the pink;
And down the borders, well I know,
The poppy and the pansy blow . . .
Oh! there the chestnuts, summer through,
Beside the river make for you
A tunnel of green gloom, and sleep
Deeply above; and green and deep
The stream mysterious glides beneath,
Green as a dream and deep as death.
— Oh, damn! I know it! and I know
How the May fields all golden show,
And when the day is young and sweet,

Gild gloriously the bare feet
That run to bathe . . .
Du lieber Gott!

Here am I, sweating, sick, and hot,
And there the shadowed waters fresh
Lean up to embrace the naked flesh.
Temperamentvoll German Jews
Drink beer around; — and *there* the dews
Are soft beneath a morn of gold.
Here tulips bloom as they are told;
Unkempt about those hedges blows
An English unofficial rose;
And there the unregulated sun
Slopes down to rest when day is done,
And wakes a vague unpunctual star,
A slippered Hesper; and there are
Meads towards Haslingfield and Coton
Where *das Betreten's* not *verboten*.

εἴθε γενοίμην . . . would I were
In Grantchester, in Grantchester! —
Some, it may be, can get in touch
With Nature there, or Earth, or such.
And clever modern men have seen
A Faun a-peeping through the green,
And felt the Classics were not dead,
To glimpse a Naiad's reedy head,
Or hear the Goat-foot piping low: . . .
But these are things I do not know.
I only know that you may lie
Day long and watch the Cambridge sky,
And, flower-lulled in sleepy grass,
Hear the cool lapse of hours pass,
Until the centuries blend and blur
In Grantchester, in Grantchester . . .
Still in the dawnlit waters cool

His ghostly lordship swims his pool,
And tries the strokes, essays the tricks,
Long learnt on Hellespont, or Styx.
Dan Chaucer hears his river still
Chatter beneath a phantom mill.
Tennyson notes, with studious eye,
How Cambridge waters hurry by . . .
And in that garden, black and white,
Creep whispers through the grass all night;
And spectral dance, before the dawn,
A hundred Vicars down the lawn;
Curates, long dust, will come and go
On lissom, clerical, printless toe;
And oft between the boughs is seen
The sly shade of a Rural Dean . . .
Till, at a shiver in the skies,
Vanishing with Satanic cries,
The prim ecclesiastic rout
Leaves but a startled sleeper-out,
Grey heavens, the first bird's drowsy calls,
The falling house that never falls.

God! I will pack, and take a train,
And get me to England once again!
For England's the one land, I know,
Where men with Splendid Hearts may go;
And Cambridgeshire, of all England,
The shire for Men who Understand;
And of *that* district I prefer
The lovely hamlet Grantchester.
For Cambridge people rarely smile,
Being urban, squat, and packed with guile;
And Royston men in the far South
Are black and fierce and strange of mouth;
At Over they fling oaths at one,
And worse than oaths at Trumpington,
And Ditton girls are mean and dirty,

And there's none in Harston under thirty,
And folks in Shelford and those parts
Have twisted lips and twisted hearts,
And Barton men make Cockney rhymes,
And Coton's full of nameless crimes,
And things are done you'd not believe
At Madingley, on Christmas Eve.
Strong men have run for miles and miles,
When one from Cherry Hinton smiles;
Strong men have blanched, and shot their wives,
Rather than send them to St. Ives;
Strong men have cried like babes, bydam,
To hear what happened at Babraham.
But Grantchester! ah, Grantchester!
There's peace and holy quiet there,
Great clouds along pacific skies,
And men and women with straight eyes,
Lithe children lovelier than a dream,
A bosky wood, a slumbrous stream,
And little kindly winds that creep
Round twilight corners, half asleep.
In Grantchester their skins are white;
They bathe by day, they bathe by night;
The women there do all they ought;
The men observe the Rules of Thought.
They love the Good; they worship Truth;
They laugh uproariously in youth;
(And when they get to feeling old,
They up and shoot themselves, I'm told) . . .

Ah God! to see the branches stir
Across the moon at Grantchester!
To smell the thrilling-sweet and rotten
Unforgettable, unforgotten
River-smell, and hear the breeze
Sobbing in the little trees.
Say, do the elm-clumps greatly stand

Still guardians of that holy land?
The chestnuts shade, in reverend dream,
The yet unacademic stream?
Is dawn a secret shy and cold
Anadyomene, silver-gold?
And sunset still a golden sea
From Haslingfield to Madingley?
And after, ere the night is born,
Do hares come out about the corn?
Oh, is the water sweet and cool,
Gentle and brown, above the pool?
And laughs the immortal river still
Under the mill, under the mill?
Say, is there Beauty yet to find?
And Certainty? and Quiet kind?
Deep meadows yet, for to forget
The lies, and truths, and pain? . . . oh! yet
Stands the Church clock at ten to three?
And is there honey still for tea?

THE GREAT LOVER

I HAVE been so great a lover: filled my days
So proudly with the splendour of Love's praise,
The pain, the calm, and the astonishment,
Desire illimitable, and still content,
And all dear names men use, to cheat despair,
For the perplexed and viewless streams that bear
Our hearts at random down the dark of life.
Now, ere the unthinking silence on that strife
Steals down, I would cheat drowsy Death so far,
My night shall be remembered for a star
That outshone all the suns of all men's days.
Shall I not crown them with immortal praise
Whom I have loved, who have given me, dared with me
High secrets, and in darkness knelt to see
The inenarrable godhead of delight?

Love is a flame; — we have beaconed the world's night.
A city: — and we have built it, these and I.
An emperor: — we have taught the world to die.
So, for their sakes I loved, ere I go hence,
And the high cause of Love's magnificence,
And to keep loyalties young, I'll write those names
Golden for ever, eagles, crying flames,
And set them as a banner, that men may know,
To dare the generations, burn, and blow
Out on the wind of Time, shining and streaming . . .
These I have loved:
White plates and cups, clean-gleaming,
Ringed with blue lines; and feathery, faery dust;
Wet roofs, beneath the lamp-light; the strong crust
Of friendly bread; and many-tasting food;
Rainbows; and the blue bitter smoke of wood;
And radiant raindrops couching in cool flowers;
And flowers themselves, that sway through sunny hours,
Dreaming of moths that drink them under the moon;
Then, the cool kindliness of sheets, that soon
Smooth away trouble; and the rough male kiss
Of blankets; grainy wood; live hair that is
Shining and free; blue-massing clouds; the keen
Unpassioned beauty of a great machine;
The benison of hot water; furs to touch;
The good smell of old clothes; and other such —
The comfortable smell of friendly fingers,
Hair's fragrance, and the musty reek that lingers
About dead leaves and last year's ferns. . . .
Dear names,
And thousand other throng to me! Royal flames;
Sweet water's dimpling laugh from tap or spring;
Holes in the ground; and voices that do sing;
Voices in laughter, too; and body's pain,
Soon turned to peace; and the deep-panting train;
Firm sands; the little dulling edge of foam
That browns and dwindles as the wave goes home;

And washen stones, gay for an hour; the cold
Graveness of iron; moist black earthen mould;
Sleep; and high places; footprints in the dew;
And oaks; and brown horse-chestnuts, glossy-new;
And new-peeled sticks; and shining pools on grass; —
All these have been my loves. And these shall pass,
Whatever passes not, in the great hour,
Nor all my passion, all my prayers, have power
To hold them with me through the gate of Death.
They'll play deserter, turn with the traitor breath,
Break the high bond we made, and sell Love's trust
And sacramented covenant to the dust.
Oh, never a doubt but, somewhere, I shall wake,
And give what's left of love again, and make
New friends, now strangers. . . .
But the best I've known,
Stays here, and changes, breaks, grows old, is blown
About the winds of the world, and fades from brains
Of living men, and dies.
Nothing remains.

O dear my loves, O faithless, once again
This one last gift I give: that after men
Shall know, and later lovers, far-removed,
Praise you, "All these were lovely"; say, "He loved."

JAMES ELROY FLECKER (1884–1915)

When James Flecker died of consumption at Davos Platz at the age of thirty-one, many critics felt that the age had lost one of its most promising as well as one of its most accomplished poets. The not unaccountable, but quite useless argument as to the relative merits of Flecker and Brooke may be left to decide itself. They each made a distinctive contribution to the poetry of the new century, and the second volume of *Georgian*

Poetry was dedicated to their joint memory; but otherwise they had little or nothing in common, beyond a love of the English countryside. Brooke's intellectual lucidity was a world away from Flecker's rich and often oriental fancy. *Hassan*, a play that gained Flecker much applause by an elaborate production after his death, revealed at once the vigour of his talent and the dangers to which its development would have been exposed had he lived. But it contained two perfect lyrics that with a dozen other poems no less lovely will keep his name securely among the poets of his generation. And of his best work many readers will most cherish such verses as have in them no strain of tropical sweetness.

YASMIN

A Ghazel

How splendid in the morning glows the lily: with what grace he throws
His supplication to the rose: do roses nod the head, Yasmin?

But when the silver dove descends I find the little flower of friends
Whose very name that sweetly ends I say when I have said, Yasmin.

The morning light is clear and cold: I dare not in that light behold
A whiter light, a deeper gold, a glory too far shed, Yasmin.

But when the deep red eye of day is level with the lone highway,
And some to Meccah turn to pray, and I toward thy bed, Yasmin:

Or when the wind beneath the moon is drifting like a soul aswoon,
And harping planets talk love's tune with milky wings outspread, Yasmin,

Shower down thy love, O burning bright! For one night or the other night
Will come the Gardener in white, and gathered flowers are dead, Yasmin.

THE OLD SHIPS

I HAVE seen old ships sail like swans asleep
Beyond the village which men still call Tyre,
With leaden age o'ercargoed, dipping deep
For Famagusta and the hidden sun
That rings black Cyprus with a lake of fire;
And all those ships were certainly so old —
Who knows how oft with squat and noisy gun,
Questing brown slaves or Syrian oranges,
The pirate Genoese
Hell-raked them till they rolled
Blood, water, fruit and corpses up the hold.
But now through friendly seas they softly run,
Painted the mid-sea blue or shore-sea green,
Still patterned with the vine and grapes in gold.

But I have seen
Pointing her shapely shadows from the dawn
And image tumbled on a rose-swept bay
A drowsy ship of some yet older day;
And, wonder's breath indrawn,
Thought I — who knows — who knows — but in that same
(Fished up beyond Aeaea, patched up new
— Stern painted brighter blue —)

That talkative, bald-headed seaman came
(Twelve patient comrades sweating at the oar)
From Troy's doom-crimson shore,
And with great lies about his wooden horse
Set the crew laughing, and forgot his course.

It was so old a ship — who knows, who knows?
— And yet so beautiful, I watched in vain
To see the mast burst open with a rose,
And the whole deck put on its leaves again.

TO A POET A THOUSAND YEARS HENCE

I WHO am dead a thousand years,
And wrote this sweet archaic song,
Send you my words for messengers
The way I shall not pass along.

I care not if you bridge the seas,
Or ride secure the cruel sky,
Or build consummate palaces
Of metal or of masonry.

But have you wine and music still,
And statues and a bright-eyed love,
And foolish thoughts of good and ill,
And prayers to them who sit above?

How shall we conquer? Like a wind
That falls at eve our fancies blow,
And old Mæonides the blind
Said it three thousand years ago.

O friend unseen, unborn, unknown,
Student of our sweet English tongue,
Read out my words at night, alone:
I was a poet, I was young.

Since I can never see your face,
And never shake you by the hand,
I send my soul through time and space
To greet you. You will understand.

THE GOLDEN JOURNEY TO SAMARKAND

Prologue

We who with songs beguile your pilgrimage
And swear that Beauty lives though lilies die,
We Poets of the proud old lineage
Who sing to find your hearts, we know not why, —

What shall we tell you? Tales, marvellous tales
Of ships and stars and isles where good men rest,
Where nevermore the rose of sunset pales,
And winds and shadows fall toward the West:

And there the world's first huge white-bearded kings
In dim glades sleeping, murmur in their sleep,
And closer round their breasts the ivy clings,
Cutting its pathway slow and red and deep.

II

And how beguile you? Death has no repose
Warmer and deeper than that Orient sand
Which hides the beauty and bright faith of those
Who made the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

And now they wait and whiten peaceably,
Those conquerors, those poets, those so fair:
They know the time comes, not only you and I,
But the whole world shall whiten, here or there;

When those long caravans that cross the plain
With dauntless feet and sound of silver bells

Put forth no more for glory or for gain,
  Take no more solace from the palm-girt wells,

When the great markets by the sea shut fast
  All that calm Sunday that goes on and on:
When even lovers find their peace at last,
  And Earth is but a star, that once had shone.

Epilogue

At the Gate of the Sun, Bagdad, in olden time

THE MERCHANTS (*together*)

Away, for we are ready to a man!
  Our camels sniff the evening and are glad.
Lead on, O Master of the Caravan:
  Lead on the Merchant-Princes of Bagdad.

THE CHIEF DRAPER

Have we not Indian carpets dark as wine,
  Turbans and sashes, gowns and bows and veils,
And broideries of intricate design,
  And printed hangings in enormous bales?

THE CHIEF GROCER

We have rose-candy, we have spikenard,
  Mastic and terebinth and oil and spice,
And such sweet jams meticulously jarred
  As God's own Prophet eats in Paradise.

THE PRINCIPAL JEWS

And we have manuscripts in peacock styles
  By Ali of Damascus; we have swords
Engraved with storks and apes and crocodiles,
  And heavy beaten necklaces, for Lords.

THE MASTER OF THE CARAVAN

But you are nothing but a lot of Jews.

THE PRINCIPAL JEWS

Sir, even dogs have daylight, and we pay.

THE MASTER OF THE CARAVAN

But who are ye in rags and rotten shoes,
You dirty-bearded, blocking up the way?

THE PILGRIMS

We are the pilgrims, master; we shall go
Always a little further: it may be
Beyond that last blue mountain barred with snow,
Across that angry or that glimmering sea,
White on a throne or guarded in a cave
There lives a prophet who can understand
Why men were born: but surely we are brave,
Who make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

THE CHIEF MERCHANT

We gnaw the nail of hurry. Master, away!

ONE OF THE WOMEN

O turn your eyes to where your children stand.
Is not Bagdad the beautiful? O stay!

THE MERCHANTS (*in chorus*)

We take the Golden Road to Samarkand.

AN OLD MAN

Have you not girls and garlands in your homes,
Eunuchs and Syrian boys at your command?
Seek not excess: God hateth him who roams!

THE MERCHANTS (*in chorus*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

A PILGRIM WITH A BEAUTIFUL VOICE

Sweet to ride forth at evening from the wells
When shadows pass gigantic on the sand,
And softly through the silence beat the bells
Along the Golden Road to Samarkand.

A MERCHANT

We travel not for trafficking alone:
By hotter winds our fiery hearts are fanned:
For lust of knowing what should not be known
We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

THE MASTER OF THE CARAVAN

Open the gate, O watchman of the night!

THE WATCHMAN

Ho, travellers, I open. For what land
Leave you the dim-moon city of delight?

THE MERCHANTS (*with a shout*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.
The Caravan passes through the gate

THE WATCHMAN (*consoling the women*)

What would ye, ladies? It was ever thus.
Men are unwise and curiously planned.

A WOMAN

They have their dreams, and do not think of us.

VOICES OF THE CARAVAN (*in the distance singing*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

PHILIP EDWARD THOMAS (1878–1917)

EDWARD THOMAS, as he is generally known, was killed in the war at the age of thirty-nine. He had for several years been known as a critic and writer of prose studies

covering a great variety of subjects, but it was only towards the end of his life that his friends learnt that he was commencing poet. He was with difficulty persuaded to publish some of his verses, and it was then found how rare a gift they revealed. His poetry comes from a very shy and personal mood that sometimes seems to lack variety if we bear it company for long at a time. But to read a poem or two at intervals is to be impressed at each return by the eager intimacy with which Thomas went about the familiar ways of England and of his own speculation. His invention made no parade of vigour, but he borrowed hints from no one.

ADLESTROP

Yes. I remember Adlestrop —
The name, because one afternoon
Of heat the express-train drew up there
Unwontedly. It was late June.

The steam hissed. Someone cleared his throat.
No one left and no one came
On the bare platform. What I saw
Was Adlestrop — only, the name.

And willows, willow-herb, and grass,
And meadowsweet, and haycocks dry,
No whit less still and lonely fair
Than the high cloudlets in the sky.

And for that minute a blackbird sang
Close by, and round him, mistier,
Farther and farther, all the birds
Of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.

NOVEMBER

November's days are thirty:
November's earth is dirty,

Those thirty days, from first to last;
And the prettiest things on ground are the paths
With morning and evening hobnails dinted,
With foot and wing-tip overprinted
Or separately charactered,
Of little beast and little bird.
The fields are mashed by sheep, the roads
Make the worst going, the best the woods
Where dead leaves upward and downward scatter.
Few care for the mixture of earth and water,
Twig, leaf, flint, thorn,
Straw, feather, all that men scorn,
Pounded up and sodden by flood,
Condemned as mud.

But of all the months when earth is greener
Not one has clean skies that are cleaner.
Clean and clear and sweet and cold,
They shine above the earth so old,
While the after-tempest cloud
Sails over in silence though winds are loud,
Till the full moon in the east
Looks at the planet in the west
And earth is silent as it is black,
Yet not unhappy for its lack.
Up from the dirty earth men stare:
One imagines a refuge there
Above the mud, in the pure bright
Of the cloudless heavenly light:
Another loves earth and November more dearly
Because without them, he sees clearly,
The sky would be nothing more to his eye
Than he, in any case, is to the sky;
He loves even the mud whose dyes
Renounce all brightness to the skies.

COCK-CROW

Out of the wood of thoughts that grows by night
To be cut down by the sharp axe of light, —
Out of the night, two cocks together crow,
Cleaving the darkness with a silver blow:
And bright before my eyes twin trumpeters stand,
Heralds of splendour, one at either hand,
Each facing each as in a coat of arms:
The milkers lace their boots up at the farms.

FOR THESE

An acre of land between the shore and the hills,
Upon a ledge that shows my kingdoms three,
The lovely visible earth and sky and sea,
Where what the curlew needs not, the farmer tills:

A house that shall love me as I love it,
Well-hedged, and honoured by a few ash-trees
That linnets, greenfinches, and goldfinches
Shall often visit and make love in and flit:

A garden I need never go beyond,
Broken but neat, whose sunflowers every one
Are fit to be the sign of the Rising Sun:
A spring, a brook's bend, or at least a pond:

For these I ask not, but, neither too late
Nor yet too early, for what men call content,
And also that something may be sent
To be contented with, I ask of fate.

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE (1892–1917)

The Irish poet who, as a corporal, was killed in the war at the age of twenty-five. His first book, published in 1916, was introduced to the public by Lord Dunsany,

who was his captain in the Inniskilling Fusiliers, and who performed a like service for the young poet's subsequent and posthumous volumes. Ledwidge was a natural lyrist of very rare quality, coming of peasant stock, making his first rhymes in the Irish village where he was born, and finding himself as a poet when employed in a grocer's shop in Dublin. When the war came and he went to give his life in it, he continued to write poems that in their dewy freshness reflected hardly a tone or hue of the horror that surrounded him. The exquisite little elegy on Thomas McDonagh, himself one of the poets who met so tragic an end in the Irish rebellion of 1916, is not only the most deeply felt of his very few war poems, but one of the most poignant pieces in the whole range of war poetry. *Songs of the Fields* and *Songs of Peace* were the names of the two books that he lived to name, and it was of the fields and peace that he sang till the end. A very brave, and with his little sheaf of lyrics, a very memorable poet.

HAD I A GOLDEN POUND

(*After the Irish*)

Had I a golden pound to spend,
My love should mend and sew no more.
And I would buy her a little quern,
Easy to turn on the kitchen floor.

And for her windows curtains white,
With birds in flight and flowers in bloom,
To face with pride the road to town,
And mellow down her sunlit room.

And with silver change we'd prove
The truth of Love to Life's own end,
With hearts the years could but embolden,
Had I a golden pound to spend.

THOMAS McDONAGH

He shall not hear the bittern cry
In the wild sky, where he is lain,
Nor voices of the sweeter birds
Above the wailing of the rain.

Nor shall he know when loud March blows
Thro' slanting snows her fanfare shrill,
Blowing to flame the golden cup
Of many an upset daffodil.

But when the Dark Cow leaves the moor,
And pastures poor with greedy weeds,
Perhaps he'll hear her low at morn
Lifting her horn in pleasant meads.

EVENING IN FEBRUARY

The windy evening drops a grey
Old eyelid down across the sun,
The last crow leaves the ploughman's way,
And happy lambs make no more fun.

Wild parsley buds beside my feet,
A doubtful thrush makes hurried tune,
The steeple in the village street
Doth seem to pierce the twilight moon.

I hear and see those changing charms,
For all — my thoughts are fixed upon
The hurry and the loud alarms
Before the fall of Babylon.

THE WEDDING MORNING

Spread the feast, and let there be
Such music heard as best beseems

A king's son coming from the sea
To wed a maiden of the streams.

Poets, pale for long ago,
Bring sweet sounds from rock and flood,
You by echo's accent know
Where the water is and wood.

Harpers whom the moths of Time
Bent and wrinkled dusty brown,
Her chains are falling with a chime,
Sweet as bells in Heaven town.

But, harpers, leave your harps aside,
And, poets, leave awhile your dreams.
The storm has come upon the tide
And Cathleen weeps among her streams.

IN SEPTEMBER

Still are the meadowlands, and still
Ripens the upland corn,
And over the brown gradual hill
The moon has dipped a horn.

The voices of the dear unknown
With silent hearts now call,
My rose of youth is overblown
And trembles to the fall.

My song forsakes me like the birds
That leave the rain and grey,
I hear the music of the words
My lute can never say.

PAN

He knows the safe ways and unsafe
And he will lead the lambs to fold,

Gathering them with his merry pipe,
The gentle and the overbold.

He counts them over one by one,
And leads them back by cliff and steep,
To grassy hills where dawn is wide,
And they may run and skip and leap.

And just because he loves the lambs
He settles them for rest at noon,
And plays them on his oaten pipe
The very wonder of a tune.

JAMES STEPHENS (b. 1882)

The Crock of Gold, *The Charwoman's Daughter*, and other novels of a rare and personal beauty, have not obscured the shining merits of Mr. Stephens's lyrics. For a time he was librarian to the National Gallery at Dublin, but in recent years has been living in Paris and London. He is one of the poets about whom critical argument is profitless, if not impossible. He sings, and sings rightly. The springs of his verse are clear and bubbling, and in a dozen lines or so he can give us the satisfaction of a gracious thing perfectly done. A few longer poems have added to his successes, but even these are notable always for their fresh and happy lyrical impulse.

IN THE POPPY FIELD[1]

Mad Patsy said, he said to me,
That every morning he could see
An angel walking on the sky;
Across the sunny skies of morn
He threw great handfuls far and nigh
Of poppy seed among the corn;

[1] From *The Hill of Vision*. Copyright, 1912, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

— And then, said he, the angels run
To see the poppies in the sun —

— A poppy is a devil weed, —
I said to him — he disagreed:
He said the devil had no hand
In spreading flowers tall and fair
By corn and rye and meadow land,
And gurth and barrow everywhere:
The devil has not any flower,
But only money in his power.

And then he stretched out in the sun,
And rolled upon his back for fun!
He kicked his legs and roared for joy
Because the sun was shining down!
He said he was a little boy
And wouldn't work for any clown!
He ran and laughed behind a bee;
And danced for very ecstasy!

THE SNARE[1]

I HEAR a sudden cry of pain!
There is a rabbit in the snare:
Now I hear the cry again,
But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where
He is calling out for aid!
Crying on the frightened air,
Making everything afraid!

Making everything afraid!
Wrinkling up his little face!
As he cries again for aid;
— And I cannot find the place!

[1] From *Poetry Recital.* Copyright, 1920, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

And I cannot find the place
Where his paw is in the snare!
Little One! Oh, Little One!
I am searching everywhere!

WHAT THOMAS SAID IN A PUB[1]

I saw God! Do you doubt it?
Do you dare to doubt it?
I saw the Almighty Man! His hand
Was resting on a mountain! And
He looked upon the World, and all about it:
I saw Him plainer than you see me now
— You mustn't doubt it!

He was not satisfied!
His look was all dissatisfied!
His beard swung on a wind, far out of sight
Behind the world's curve! And there was light
Most fearful from His forehead! And He sighed —
— That star went always wrong, and from the start
I was dissatisfied! —

He lifted up His hand!
I say He heaved a dreadful hand
Over the spinning earth! Then I said, — Stay,
You must not strike it, God! I'm in the way!
And I will never move from where I stand! —
He said, — Dear child, I feared that you were dead, —
. . . And stayed His hand!

THE CHERRY TREE[1]

Come from your bed, my drowsy gentleman!
And you, fair lady, rise and braid your hair!
And bid the children wash, if that they can;
If not, assist you them, and make them fair

[1] From *Collected Poems*. Copyright, 1926, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

As is the morning, and the morning sky,
And all the sun doth warm in golden air.

For he has climbed the height these times ago!
He laughed about the hills and they were glad;
With bubbled pearl he set the stream aglow
And laced the hedge in silver; and he clad
The lawn in pomp of green, and white, and gold;
And bade the world forget it had been sad.

Then lift yourself, good sir! And you, sweet dame,
Unlash your evening eyes of pious grey!
Call on the children by each lovéd name,
And set them on the grass and bid them play;
And play with them a while, and sing with them,
Beneath the cherry bush, a rondelay.

IN WASTE PLACES[1]

As a naked man I go
Through the desert, sore afraid;
Holding high my head, although
I'm as frightened as a maid.

The lion crouches there! I saw
In barren rocks his amber eye!
He parts the cactus with his paw!
He stares at me, as I go by!

He would pad upon my trace
If he thought I was afraid!
If he knew my hardy face
Veils the terrors of a maid.

He rises in the night-time, and
He stretches forth! He snuffs the air!
He roars! He leaps along the sand!
He creeps! He watches everywhere!

[1] From *Songs from the Clay*. Copyright, 1915, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

His burning eyes, his eyes of bale
Through the darkness I can see!
He lashes fiercely with his tail!
He makes again to spring at me!

I am the lion, and his lair!
I am the fear that frightens me!
I am the desert of despair!
And the night of agony!

Night or day, whate'er befall,
I must walk that desert land,
Until I dare my fear, and call
The lion out to lick my hand!

IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING[1]

I THOUGHT I heard Him calling! Did you hear
A sound? a little sound!
My curious ear
Is dinned with flying noises; and the tree
Goes — whisper, whisper, whisper, silently,
Till all its whispers spread into the sound
Of a dull roar . . .

— Lie closer to the ground:
The shade is deep, and He may pass us by,
We are so very small, and His great eye,
Customed to starry majesties, may gaze
Too wide to spy us hiding in the maze:

— Ah, misery! The sun has not yet gone,
And we are naked! He will look upon
Our crouching shame! May make us stand upright,
Burning in terror — O that it were night — !
He may not come . . . What! Listen! Listen now —
He's here! Lie closer . . . *Adam, where art thou?*

[1] From *The Hill of Vision.* Copyright, 1912, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

JOHN COLLINGS SQUIRE (b. 1884)

Mr. Squire, still a young man, has a high and deserved reputation as a critic, and his editorship of *The London Mercury* may be said to have marked an epoch in English literary journalism. In poetry he has attempted many manners with distinction. His parodies — for which he now professes no favour — are among the best of his time, and a very real social indignation has on occasion made him a satirist of direct and witty power. Into his other verse he has brought a free but well-proportioned use of contemporary idiom, controlled always by his profound and sympathetic knowledge of English poetry. One of the most alert minds of his generation, he has been able to add an intellectual brightness of his own to the tradition that he so greatly respects.

THE THREE HILLS

There were three hills that stood alone
With woods about their feet.
They dreamed quiet when the sun shone
And whispered when the rain beat.

They wore all three their coronals
Till men with houses came
And scored their heads with pits and walls
And thought the hills were tame.

Red and white when day shines bright
They hide the green for miles.
Where are the old hills gone? At night
The moon looks down and smiles.

She sees the captors small and weak,
She knows the prisoners strong,
She hears the patient hills that speak:
"Brothers, it is not long;

"Brothers, we stood when they were not
Ten thousand summers past.
Brothers, when they are clean forgot
We shall outlive the last;

"One shall die and one shall flee
With terror in his train,
And earth shall eat the stones, and we
Shall be alone again."

THE DISCOVERY

THERE was an Indian, who had known no change,
Who strayed content along a sunlit beach
Gathering shells. He heard a sudden strange
Commingled noise; looked up; and gasped for speech.
For in the bay, where nothing was before,
Moved on the sea, by magic, huge canoes,
With bellying cloths on poles, and not one oar,
And fluttering coloured signs and clambering crews.

And he, in fear, this naked man alone,
His fallen hands forgetting all their shells,
His lips gone pale, knelt low behind a stone,
And stared, and saw, and did not understand,
Columbus's doom-burdened caravels
Slant to the shore, and all their seamen land.

THE SHIP

THERE was no song nor shout of joy
Nor beam of moon or sun,
When she came back from the voyage
Long ago begun;
But twilight on the waters
Was quiet and grey,
And she glided steady, steady and pensive,
Over the open bay.

Her sails were brown and ragged,
And her crew hollow-eyed,
But their silent lips spoke content
And their shoulders pride;
Though she had no captives on her deck,
And in her hold
There were no heaps of corn or timber
Or silks or gold.

CHRISTMAS HYMN FOR LAMBETH

Patriotism for Pauper Children. — *The Lambeth Guardians yesterday decided that, in order that the Poor Law school children may have an opportunity of appreciating the position of national affairs, the usual practice of allowing each child an egg for breakfast on Christmas morning be suspended this year. The Chairman of the Board remarked that it was better to let the children go without eggs than to give them shop eggs.* — *The Times*, November 12, 1914.

Lambeth is the site of the historic archi-episcopal palace. — *Guide to London.*

We are the boys of the Bulldog Breed. — *Nos Omnes.*

HARK! the Lambeth Guardians sing:
Glory to the new-born King;
Glory to the gun and sword
That will teach the German horde
In a way they'll not forget,
England still is England yet.
We are also sons of Drake
Who would strike for England's sake;
We shall help to win the day
In our more prosaic way.

None, we know, would dare suggest
That we have not done our best
In the past to educate
Babes who sponge upon the State,
To promote their civic sense
And save the ratepayers expense.

Should this education cease
With the piping times of peace?
No; and we know how to teach them
In a way we hope will reach them.

Eggs have been upon occasion
Instruments of moral suasion.
We have brought from Scandinavia
For the birthday of the Saviour,
Eggs which taught our infant folk
To detest the foreign yolk;
Eggs which would, we felt, remind them
They must take things as they find them,
And that little pauper hearts
Are not even good in parts.

This régime, we think, suffices
For the children's normal vices;
But the want of public spirit —
What return does that not merit?
Loudly we in concert call
They should have no eggs at all;
Dock their food, and when they're starvin'
They'll perhaps attend to Garvin.
Eggs is eggs, and eggs is dear,
They shall have no eggs this year!

. . . . . .

Guardians mine, so far so good
This adjustment in the food;
But, my Guardians, why, I beg,
Go no further than an egg?
If you'd have them not ignore
All the grave effects of war,
Sell their beds and let them freeze
Like the Belgian refugees;
Go the whole instructive hog,
Shell the workhouse, burn and flog.

Flog a few and shoot a few —
You will surely, if you do,
Rouse them from their lethargy.
Though the weaker ones may cry
For dead fathers and dead mothers
They will realise that others'
Situation is much worse,
And agree that war's a curse,
And imbibe a novel zeal
For their native commonweal.

Thus when they with clearer eyes
Are persuaded to despise
Luxury, and cease to treasure
A vain and empty life of pleasure,
Duly chastened they will sing:
"Glory to the new-born King!
I am sorry, Jesus dear,
I don't deserve an egg this year;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
And Christ forgive a workhouse child."

. . . . . .

Then, my Guardians, you will go
Home to Alexandra Row,
Chatsworth Terrace or "St. Ann's,"
"River View," "The Den," "The Manse,"
Justly proud of what you've done
To repel the hated Hun,
Hoping that it will afford
Satisfaction to the Board;
And round your Christmas table heavy
With things (thank God we've got a Navy!)
You will talk about the War
And eat and eat until you snore.

JOHN FREEMAN (1880–1929)

Mr. Freeman made no easy concessions to popular taste. His was a deliberate mind, searching with a slow, powerful rhythm, far down into its own experience, and we have to wait patiently on its communications. But a poet has every right to demand this of us, and Mr. Freeman does not waste our time. His imagery is exact and personal, and if we sometimes pause in our admiration to consider the care with which it has been wrought, the admiration is seldom lessened. He is well known also as a critical essayist, and his work here shows the devotion with which he studied the art that he practiced so well. His recent death has been an untimely loss to poetry.

STONE TREES

Last night a sword-light in the sky
Flashed a swift terror on the dark.
In that sharp light the fields did lie
Naked and stone-like; each tree stood
Like a tranced woman, bound and stark.
  Far off the wood
With darkness ridged the riven dark.

And cows astonied stared with fear,
And sheep crept to the knees of cows,
And conies to their burrows slid,
And rooks were still in rigid boughs,
And all things else were still or hid.
  From all the wood
Came but the owl's hoot, ghostly, clear.

In that cold trance the earth was held
It seemed an age, or time was nought.
Sure never from that stone-like field

Sprang golden corn, nor from those chill
Grey granite trees was music wrought.
In all the wood
Even the tall poplar hung stone still.

It seemed an age, or time was none . . .
Slowly the earth heaved out of sleep
And shivered, and the trees of stone
Bent and sighed in the gusty wind,
And rain swept as birds flocking sweep.
Far off the wood
Rolled the slow thunders on the wind.

From all the wood came no brave bird,
No song broke through the close-fall'n night,
Nor any sound from cowering herd:
Only a dog's long lonely howl
When from the window poured pale light.
And from the wood
The hoot came ghostly of the owl.

THE BODY

When I had dreamed and dreamed what woman's beauty was,
And how that beauty seen from unseen surely flowed,
I turned and dreamed again, but sleeping saw no more:
My eyes shut and my mind with inward vision glowed.

"I did not think!" I cried, seeing that wavering shape
That steadied and then wavered, as a cherry bough in June
Lifts and falls in the wind — each fruit a fruit of light;
And then she stood as clear as an unclouded moon.

As clear and still she stood, moonlike remotely near;
I saw and heard her breathe, I years and years away.

Her light streamed through the years, I saw her clear
and still,
Shape and spirit together mingling night with day.

Water falling, falling with the curve of time
Over green-hued rock, then plunging to its pool
Far, far below, a falling spear of light;
Water falling golden from the sun but moonlike cool:

Water has the curve of her shoulder and breast,
Water falls as straight as her body rose,
Water her brightness has from neck to still feet,
Water crystal-cold as her cold body flows.

But not water has the colour I saw when I dreamed,
Nor water such strength has. I joyed to behold
How the blood lit her body with lamps of fire
And made the flesh glow that like water gleamed cold.

A flame in her arms and in each finger flame,
And flame in her bosom, flame above, below,
The curve of climbing flame in her waist and her
thighs;
From foot to head did flame into red flame flow.

I knew how beauty seen from unseen must rise,
How the body's joy for more than body's use was
made.
I knew then how the body is the body of the mind,
And how the mind's own fire beneath the cool skin
played.

O shape that once to have seen is to see evermore,
Falling stream that falls to the deeps of the mind,
Fire that once lit burns while aught burns in the world,
Foot to head a flame moving in the spirit's wind!

If these eyes could see what these eyes have not seen —
The inward vision clear — how should I look, for joy,
Knowing that beauty's self rose visible in the world
Over age that darkens, and griefs that destroy?

HOME FOR LOVE

Because the earth is vast and dark
And wet and cold;
Because man's heart wants warmth and light
Lest it grow old;

Therefore the house was built — wall, roof
And brick and beam,
By a lost hand following the lost
Delight of a dream.

And room and stair show how that hand
Groped in eager doubt,
With needless weight of teasing timber
Matching his thought —

Such fond superfluousness of strength
In wall and wood
As his half-wise, half-fearful eye
Deemed only good.

His brain he built into the house,
Laboured his bones;
He burnt his heart into the brick
And red hearth-stones.

It is his blood that makes the house
Still warm, safe, bright,
Honest as aim and eye and hand,
As clean, as light.

Because the earth is vast and dark
The house was built —
Now with another heart and fire
To be fulfilled.

MOON-BATHERS

Falls from her heaven the Moon, and stars sink burning
Into the sea where blackness rims the sea,
Silently quenched. Faint light that the waves hold
Is only light remaining; yet still gleam
The sands where those now-sleeping young moon-bathers
Came dripping out of the sea and from their arms
Shook flakes of light, dancing on the foamy edge
Of quiet waves. They were all things of light
Tossed from the sea to dance under the Moon —
Her nuns, dancing within her dying round,
Clear limbs and breasts silvered with Moon and waves
And quick with windlike mood and body's joy,
Withdrawn from alien vows, by wave and wind
Lightly absolved and lightly all forgetting.
An hour ago they left. Remains the gleam
Of their late motion on the salt sea-meadow,
As loveliest hues linger when the sun's gone
And float in the heavens and die in reedy pools —
So slowly, who shall say when light is gone?

GERALD GOULD (b. 1885)

Well known as a novelist and critic, his published verse is slender in volume. But the little to which an occasional addition is made at long intervals, shows that the genuine impulse of the poet is constant. Mr. Gould seems not to work his poetic invention hard, but he at least never works it to no purpose. His love poetry has

a very sweet and convincing note, and a favour that wears well. Criticism may perhaps never have very much to say about his poetry, but the critical reader at any time, now or hereafter, lighting upon his rarer verses, will know that the fortunate thing has happened again, and turn the page content.

A GARDEN IS MY SOUL

A GARDEN is my soul, which I
Must tend or slight until I die,
Or as a mansion, to be kept
With all its chambers cleaned and swept.

How shall I make my garden fit
For her I love to walk in it?
How shall I make my house so fair
She shall be glad to sojourn there?

I will arise betimes, and toil
To break the unconsenting soil,
And water with my blood and sweat
The flowers whose summer is not yet.

But all I can is not enough;
Ever I find the paths too rough
For those dear feet, the leaves that stir
Not musical enough for her.

And what when, ere the task is o'er,
There proves no time to labour more,
And I must bear to learn my fate,
Because my love stands at the gate?

Oh, then, if she consents to live
In the poor home that I can give,
How shall my garden flush with blooms,
And splendour reign in all my rooms!

But if she looks and turns away,
How shall the dark invade the day,
And a most chilly loneliness
My courts and corridors possess!

Then shall I have the heart to weed,
Or sow with hope of future seed?
Shall not my home be rather thought,
If ill for her, then good for nought?

Ah, no! for I shall not forget
To pay the past so high a debt,
If for a space the balance stood
Between the proofs of ill and good.

My love shall not be sad, nor think
She ever let her fancy link
Her life unto a life so poor
It could not suffer and endure.

She shall be proud that just because
She passed by where my garden was
From the base world there could arise
A soul made noble by her eyes.

She shall remember without shame
How to my gate her footsteps came,
And how she doubted her intent
Just for a moment ere she went.

How — for a space as brief and dear
As when, sometimes, by eye and ear,
God's glance and tone are strangely caught —
We two were wedded in her thought.

Sweet haunts my stable strength shall win
As though for her to walk therein,
And I will make my mansion fair
Because she might have sojourned there.

THE CLOUDS HAVE WINGS

The clouds have wings but fly not,
  The winds have strength but spare;
The quiet eve approves me
  Because I hush my prayer:
I know she would deny not
  Her heart's appointed task
— I know my lady loves me,
  And yet I will not ask.

But when the sky shall flower
  With keener light than eve's,
And midnight take the measure
  Of what my soul believes
— Then verily shall power
  Fulfill the thing it can,
And right be one with pleasure,
  And maid be one with man.

SOME LOVERS MAKE COMPARISON IN LOVE

Some lovers make comparison in love,
  And call their lady after that or this —
  Like honey find the sweetness of her kiss,
Or her soft speech like language of the dove;
The sky is not too high for doubting of,
  Whether herein it does not show amiss,
  And everything that good for certain is
They take for good — then name one name above.

But I'll not call my Lady dark or bright
  By any other measure than her own;
She is the rightness by which life is right,
  Sums all perfections that the world has shown,
  And is to be esteemed herself alone,
Not more than morning, neither less than night.

CLIFFORD BAX (b. 1886)

Mr. Clifford Bax is a poet and playwright, who has been associated with Nigel Playfair in some of his most entertaining productions at the famous Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith. Mr. Bax has published very little verse, but there is enough of it to give its characteristically English quality a place in contemporary poetry. Its contact with the reality of earth has a melodic grace by which we are perhaps not quite fancifully reminded of the music of his brother Arnold Bax. Some day there will be a critic who will write about the poetry of the Shires in our generation, and he will have to take Mr. Clifford Bax into account.

IN THE TRAIN

Suddenly from a wayside station,
In she comes, — a little satchelled
Country schoolgirl,
Jocund as a field of cowslips . . .

Looking hard, I think, How goodly
Must have been the stock that bore her . . .
Down the distant
Georgian days and Jacobean,

What a line of comely maidens,
Bending to avoid the tangled
Honeysuckle,
Flitted from their fathers' homestead,

Happy-eyed, to wander courting
Through the sunset-lighted meadows:
What upstanding
Sons and sires, have wooed and won them . . .

When she ripens, who shall wed her?
Will he know, I wonder? Will he
Know that, loving
Her, he loves the heart of England?

MUSICIAN

(A. B.)

Many know you now by virtue of that music
Known to me, and loved, since you and I were boys,—

Music like heard fire, or hazed with unrelinquished
Adolescent dreams of more than man may find:

I alone, or I and three or four, remember
How, in earlier years when none acclaimed your skill,

Shadowed in the morn by sycamore and chestnut,
Many a summer through our triple wicket stood;

How we pegged the net before the trees had budded;
How we played when leaves were blown across the pitch;

How we drove the ball far out amidst the orchard,
Up the strawberry beds or through the gardener's glass.

We alone — and one, perhaps, who fell in battle —
Still can see with you the games that lengthened out

Even until at last the bowler, dim with twilight,
Hit the bails, and won: and we, alone, recall

How we gathered after round the noisy tea-cups,
Tired and glad and young, and knew the world was good.

Good it was indeed, for none of us had sorrowed,
None so much as feared to hurt another's life:

Yet though all is changed, and gone the gracious garden,
Gone the scarless mind of many-troubled youth,

Count me not with those that whine for what is over, —
All that once was good is good for evermore;

All we had of joy endures, a joy within us;
All the rest of life is lovelier for those years.

THE DREAMER

Under a bridge of stone the river shuddered by.
Grey were the Wiltshire fields, and grey the rushing sky.

And while I stood in thought the wind of vision came.
It blew the whole wild world out like a candle-flame.

I saw God gazing down like someone lost in dream.
Motionlessly he watched an ever-moving stream.

Under a bridge of stone, the bridge he leaned upon,
Time and the universe were idly eddying on.

A BERKSHIRE HOLIDAY

Before the spring had flowered away full summer burst
in middle May;
The homestead walls began to glow; the garden soil
grew hot.
And we — how light of heart were we, foregathered
round a crusted tree
Whose boughs had cooled the grass below in summers
long forgot.

He whose goodwill convened us there was not grown thin with fast and prayer,
And, princely-handed, round of face, with eye of choleric blue,
He would not squander scanty breath in arguing of the soul and death, —
Nay, when of these we talked a space he wonderingly withdrew.

The young musician, pipe in hand, lay thinking out a work he planned.
Between them, tilting back his chair and speaking well, was one
Who lived by law but gave his heart to ancient Greek and Tuscan art
And thought the world had nothing fair left in it but the sun.

Our life, he said, was pinched and dry "as oranges in late July.
How would our decorous joy compare with what was once on earth?
And could they know how time has wrought, what had the great Athenians thought
When beauty was the natural air that all men breathed at birth?

"In Persia, too, men once were skilled to make life rich as fancy willed:
Fair as a tale in verse it flowed in China's golden days:
And here in England men could find once, ere the world grew sick of mind,
A gracious varied green abode, a life to love and praise."

So for a while we talked and then, remembering that the world of men
Is goodly still, for all its woe, and summertime too short,

Rose up, took racquets, left the shade, flung to the grass our coats and played,
Driving the white balls hard and low about the sunlit court.

Good was it thus to feel the tense delight of old in every sense;
Good when the count of games ran ill to draw up close and win;
Or in a lull to see on high the swallows fleck the violet sky,
And far along the wooded hill the flush of eve begin,

Until at last, with tired content, back by the flowery paths we went.
Round the laburnum hovered yet the bees upon their way.
And while through windows opened wide a new-made music flowed outside,
I and our Jacques, listening, set the chessmen out for play.

And long, with plan and counter-plan, there strove until, as dusk began,
The early stars, all tremulous, like dew came unperceived,
And sent us in at fall of night to supper and warm candlelight
And tales that good Herodotus himself had not believed.

And which is lovelier, night or day, when summer starts in middle May?
Perhaps, indeed, the cloudless night when, first remote and small,
The stars begin to seem so near that, shuddering back in panic fear,
The gazer feels that in mid-flight the spinning earth may fall.

And there, as midnight overhead her old unaltered
beauty spread
And moths about us came to pause with tender wings
upfurled,
A voice flowed on in pleasant tone praising all times
except our own,
And, half asleep, with soft applause, we let it rend the
world.

EDWARD SHANKS (b. 1892)

Was editor of *The Granta* at Cambridge, and subsequently assisted Mr. Squire for a time in the editorship of *The London Mercury*. Like many poets of his time, he has been a good deal engaged in literary criticism. He was one of the later comers to Mr. Marsh's Georgian anthologies, and his best lyrical work holds the balance firmly between tradition and revolt. He has published also a verse play, *The Queen of China*, and two or three volumes of prose studies. A certain controversial temper in some of his critical work has left no trace on the tenderness of his lyrical poetry.

A LONELY PLACE

The leafless trees, the untidy stack,
Last rainy summer raised in haste,
Watch the sky turn from fair to black
And watch the river fill and waste.

But never a footstep comes to trouble
The rooks among the new-sown corn
Or pigeons rising from late stubble
And flashing lighter as they turn.

Or if a footstep comes, 'tis mine,
Sharp on the road or soft on grass: 10

Silence divides along my line
And shuts behind me as I pass.

No other comes, no labourer
To cut his shaggy truss of hay,
Along the road no traveller,
Day after day, day after day.

And even I, when I come here,
Move softly on, subdued and still,
Lonely as death, though I can hear
Men shouting on the other hill.

Day after day, though no one sees,
The lonely place no different seems,
The trees, the stack, still images
Constant in who can say whose dreams?

TO THE UNIMPLORED BELOVED

Remain, for me, chaste, unapproached, unstirred,
Never from me shall you hear any word
Asking that you should give me what I give.
To-day I speak to you, but even to-day
You shall not know it is you to whom I say,
I love you and shall love you while I live.

Once in these years my lips have touched your lips:
O will-benumbing sweetness! — so one sips
Timidly a magic, an immortal wine,
Too strong for human bodies, only to try,
Saying that if I die one can but die,
But if I live that dangerous joy was mine.

Now move no footstep from your place, do not
Repeat that moment, nor by any jot
Of speech, or touch of hand or glance of eye

Show to me any more than common kindness,
But go your lovely way in lovely blindness,
You the still seen, the enraptured seër I.

For gathered flowers go limp, bright-dusted wings
Of handled butterflies grow shabby things,
The mistress once enjoyed becomes a woman
— Attentive, kindly, comforting, too near,
Till what was magic is no more than dear —
So, knowing I am, I will not think you human.

Some men love beauties they have found in books
Or who from pictures with unfading looks
Gaze out upon this changing fading life.
I, you — and thus; and I would have you be
Ever the same and still remote from me,
Only an image, neither lover nor wife.

THE RAINBOW

Out of the cloud-chambers this sevenfold ray is thrown,
This mystery of light,
A hundred times I have beheld the far-curved bow
Stretched over hill and marsh,

Have seen the further limb melting behind the ridge
To an often trodden coomb,
Guessed how on the sheep-worn turf the strange light must fall,
On what familiar paths.

But never till to-day I saw the rainbow's end,
Plain as a stooping shower,
That sometimes we can watch from the hill-tops in sun
Drench the dim roofs of home.

O, on that near-seen grove what drizzle of gold descends,
  On the willow's chill tassels,
And on the willow-stems, tufted with these, and on
  Young shoots springing beneath!

O could I stand there now, there where I often stood,
  Would not that showering gold
My skin and flesh saturate, mingle in my veins,
  Transform my dull body?

And if one should go now into the willow-grove,
  Would he not find the buds
Alight, still shining with traces of that caress,
  Like a girl fresh from love?

WALTER J. TURNER (b. 1889)

A POET who in the course of a busy life as a literary, and perhaps more notably as a musical, critic, has published several volumes of poems that are none the worse for making no great fuss about themselves. He has also written plays, and *The Man Who Ate the Popomack* attracted some attention when privately produced. His poetry is sometimes a little constrained and indecisive, but it frequently takes flight in clear form across a sunny sky, and at its best is notably representative of the men who were the younger poets of Mr. Marsh's Georgian anthologies.

ROMANCE

WHEN I was but thirteen or so
  I went into a golden land,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
  Took me by the hand.

My father died, my brother too,
They passed like fleeting dreams.
I stood where Popocatapetl
In the sunlight gleams.

I dimly heard the Master's voice
And boys far-off at play,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Had stolen me away.

I walked in a great golden dream
To and fro from school —
Shining Popocatapetl
The dusty streets did rule.

I walked home with a gold dark boy
And never a word I'd say,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Had taken my speech away:

I gazed entranced upon his face
Fairer than any flower —
O shining Popocatapetl
It was thy magic hour:

The houses, people, traffic seemed
Thin fading dreams by day,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
They had stolen my soul away!

IN THE CAVES OF AUVERGNE

He carved the red deer and the bull
Upon the smooth cave rock,
Returned from war, with belly full,
And scarred with many a knock,
He carved the red deer and the bull
Upon the smooth cave rock.

The stars flew by the cave's wide door,
  The clouds wild trumpets blew,
Trees rose in wild dreams from the floor,
  Flowers with dream faces grew
Up to the sky, and softly hung
  Golden and white and blue.

The woman ground her heap of corn,
  Her heart a guarded fire;
The wind played in his trembling soul
  Like a hand upon a lyre,
The wind drew faintly on the stone
  Symbols of his desire:

The red deer of the forests dark,
  Whose antlers cut the sky,
That vanishes into the mirk
  And like a dream flits by,
And by an arrow slain at last
  Is but the wind's dark body.

The bull that stands in marshy lakes
  As motionless and still
As a dark rock jutting from a plain
  Without a tree or hill;
The bull that is the sign of life,
  Its sombre, phallic will.

And from the dead, white eyes of them
  The wind springs up anew,
It blows upon the trembling heart,
  And bull and deer renew
Their flitting life in the dim past
  When that dead Hunter drew.

I sit beside him in the night,
  And, fingering his red stone,

I chase through endless forests dark
  Seeking that thing unknown,
That which is not red deer or bull,
  But which by them was shown:

By those stiff shapes in which he drew
  His soul's exalted cry,
When flying down the forest dark
  He slew and knew not why,
When he was filled with song, and strength
  Flowed to him from the sky.

The wind blows from red deer and bull,
  The clouds wild trumpets blare,
Trees rise in wild dreams from the earth,
  Flowers with dream faces stare —
O Hunter, your own shadow stands
  Within your forest lair.

DEATH'S MEN

Under a grey October sky
  The little squads that drill
Click arms and legs mechanically,
  Emptied of ragged will:

Of ragged will that frets the sky
  From crags juts ragged Pines,
A wayward immortality,
  That flies from Death's trim lines.

The men of Death stand trim and neat,
  Their faces stiff as stone,
Click, clack, go four and twenty feet
  From twelve machines of bone.

"Click, clack, left! right! form fours! incline!"
  The jack-box sergeant cries;

For twelve erect and wooden dolls
One clockwork doll replies.

And twelve souls wander 'mid still clouds
In a land of snow-drooped trees,
Faint, foaming streams fall in grey hills
Like beards in old men's knees.

Old men, old hills, old kings, their beards
Cold stone-grey, still cascades
Hung high above this shuddering earth
Where the red blood sinks and fades.

Then the quietness of all ancient things,
Their round and full repose
As balm upon twelve wandering souls
Down from the grey sky flows.

. . . . . .

The rooks from out the tall, gaunt trees
In shrieking circles pass;
Click, clack, click, clack go Death's trim men
Across the autumn grass.

ROBERT MALISE BOWYER NICHOLS
(b. 1893)

Like his friend Robert Graves, a poet whose verse was first widely discussed when he was serving with the army during the war. His very sensitive and quick imagination has already achieved much, but there is hardly a poet of his years now living of whom more may yet reasonably be expected. His verse is rich in those surprises that, once effected, seem to have been inevitable. As a lyric poet he has already done well by his generation, and, as we say, should yet do better. He has also written plays of unquestionable dramatic

force, and it is to be hoped that the discipline of the stage may before long make him an active force in the theatre. Mr. Nichols was for some time at Tokio University, lecturing in English literature, and subsequently at Hollywood making experimental studies in the film. But happily he remains a poet of quite unusual possibilities.

PLAINT OF FRIENDSHIP BY DEATH BROKEN

(*R. P., Loos*, 1915)

God, if thou livest, Thine eye on me bend,
And stay my grief and bring my pain to end:
Pain for my lost, the deepest, rarest friend
Man ever had, whence groweth this despair.

I had a friend: but, O! he is now dead;
I had a vision: for which he has bled:
I had happiness: but it is fled.
God help me now, for I must needs despair.

His eyes were dark and sad, yet never sad;
In them moved sombre figures sable-clad;
They were the deepest eyes man ever had,
They were my solemn joy — *now my despair.*

In my perpetual night they on me look,
Reading me slowly; and I cannot brook
Their silent beauty, for nor crack nor nook
Can cover me but they shall find me there.

His nose was straight, his mouth was wide yet trim;
His hair was tangled black, and through its dim
Softness his perplexed hand would writhe and swim —
Hands that were small on arms strong-knit yet spare.

He stood no taller than our common span,
Swam but nor farther leaped nor faster ran;
I know him spirit now, who seemed a man.
God help me now, for I must needs despair.

His voice was low and clear, yet it could rise
And beat in indignation at the skies;
Then no man dared to meet his fire-filled eyes,
And even I, his own friend, did not dare.

With humorous wistfulness he spoke to us,
Yet there was something more mysterious,
Beyond his words or silence, glorious:
I know not what, but we could feel it there.

I mind now how we sat one winter night
While past his open window raced the bright
Snow-torrent golden in the hot firelight . . .
I see him smiling at the streamered air.

I watched him to the open window go,
And lean long smiling, whispering to the snow,
Play with his hands amid the fiery flow
And when he turned it flamed amid his hair.

Without arose a sudden bell's huge clang
Until a thousand bells in answer rang
And midnight Oxford hummed and reeled and sang
Under the whitening fury of the air.

His figure standing in the fiery room . . .
Behind him the snow seething through the gloom . . .
The great bells shaking, thundering out their doom . . .
Soft Fiery Snow and Night his being were.

Yet he could be simply glad and take his choice,
Walking spring woods, mimicking each bird voice;

When he was glad we learned how to rejoice:
If the birds sing, 'tis to my spite they dare.

All women loved him, yet his mother won
His tenderness alone, for Moon and Sun
And rain were for him sister, brother, lovèd one,
And in their life he took an equal share.

Strength he had, too; strength of unrusted will
Buttressed his natural charity, and ill
Fared it with him who sought his good to kill:
He was its Prince and Champion anywhere.

Yet he had weakness, for he burned too fast;
And his unrecked of body at the last
He in impatience on the bayonets cast,
Body whose spirit had outsoared them there.

I had a friend, but, O! he is now dead.
Fate would not let me follow where he led.
In him I had happiness. But he is dead.
God help me now, for I must needs despair.

God, if Thou livest, and indeed didst send
Thine only Son to be to all a Friend,
Bid His dark, pitying eyes upon me bend,
And His hand heal, or *I must needs despair.*

THE WATER-LILY

The Lily floated white and red,
Pouring its scent up to the sun;
The rapt sun floating overhead
Watched no such other one.

None marked it as it spread abroad
And beautifully learned to cease:
But Beauty is its own reward,
Being a form of Peace.

LITTLE PONY

The little pony is locked in the pound,
See how he gallops and gallops around! —
Not more wild blows the scud that blusters and shocks
Through the ribs of the rails, round his head and his hocks.
His bright hoofs clatter, his long tail flies,
There is foam in his nostril, fire in his eyes.
He gallops, he curvets, he shakes out his mane,
He scuttles, he shies and must gallop again,
He bounds, he bounces, he kicks up his heels,
Stretches racing again and, racing so, squeals.
Ah, wild little sprite, roars the world then so loud?
Is there blood on the wind? Is there smoke in the cloud?
Does the Tartar give battle? The Scythian flee?
The dark wind twang darker with massed archery?
Yelp wolves on the plain? Blush the long lances red?
Crackle fires on the snow, stranger fire overhead?
Or why gallop you so with such fierce gaiety?
What is it you hear? What is it you see?

ROBERT GRAVES (b. 1895)

One of the poets who, themselves soldiers, gave distinction to the poetry of the war. His later work has developed a whimsical vein that is often very charming, if sometimes rather slight, but he rarely fails to stamp the slenderest occasion with his own engaging manner. His excursions into poetic criticism are provocative and ingenious, but not always as shrewd as the sensitive humour of his verse might lead us to expect. But no doubt he will return from these rather troubled investigations with a liberated energy to a broader exercise of his highly notable poetic gift, which will be good for poetry, for himself, and for us.

STAR TALK

"ARE you awake, Gemelli,
This frosty night?"
"We'll be awake till réveillé,
Which is sunrise," say the Gemelli,
"It's no good trying to go to sleep:
If there's wine to be got we'll drink it deep,
But rest is hopeless to-night,
But rest is hopeless to-night."

"Are you cold too, poor Pleiads,
This frosty night?"
"Yes, and so are the Hyads:
See us cuddle and hug," say the Pleiads,
"All six in a ring: it keeps us warm:
We huddle together like birds in a storm:
It's bitter weather to-night,
It's bitter weather to-night."

"What do you hunt, Orion,
This starry night?"
"The Ram, the Bull, and the Lion,
And the Great Bear," says Orion,
"With my starry quiver and beautiful belt,
I am trying to find a good thick pelt
To warm my shoulders to-night,
To warm my shoulders to-night."

"Did you hear that, Great She-Bear,
This frosty night?"
"Yes, he's talking of stripping me bare
Of my own big fur," says the She-Bear,
"I'm afraid of the man and his terrible arrow:
The thought of it chills my bones to the marrow,
And the frost so cruel to-night!
And the frost so cruel to-night!"

"How is your trade, Aquarius,
This frosty night?"
"Complaints is many and various,
And my feet are cold," says Aquarius,
"There's Venus objects to Dolphin-scales,
And Mars to Crab-spawn found in my pails,
And the pump has frozen to-night,
And the pump has frozen to-night."

THE FINDING OF LOVE

Before this generous time
Of Love in morning prime,
He had long season stood
Bound in a nightmare mood
Of dense murk, rarely lit
By Jack-o'-Lanthorn's flit
And straightway smothered spark
Of beasts' eyes in the dark,
Mourning with sense adrift,
Tears rolling swift.
With o, for Sun to blaze
Drying the cobweb-maze
Dew-sagged upon the corn,
With o, for flowering thorn,
For fly and butterfly,
For pigeons in the sky,
For robin and thrush,
For the long bulrush,
For cherry under the leaf,
For an end to grief,
For joy in steadfastness.
Then through his distress
And clouded vision came
An unknown gradual flame
By silent hands controlled,
Pale at first and cold,

Like wizard's lily-bloom
Conjured from the gloom,
Like torch of glow-worm seen
Through grasses shining green
By children half in fright,
Or Christmas candlelight
Flung on the outer snow,
Or tinsel stars that show
Their evening glory
With sheen of fairy story.

No more, no more,
Forget that went before!
Not a wrack remains
Of all his former pains.
Here's Love a drench of light,
A Sun dazzling the sight,
Well started on his race
Towards the Zenith space
Where fixed and sure
He shall endure,
Holding peace secure.

Now with his blaze
He dries the cobweb-maze
Dew-sagging on the corn,
He brings the flowering thorn,
The fly and butterfly,
And pigeons in the sky,
The robin and the thrush,
And the long bulrush,
And cherry under the leaf,
Earth in a silken dress,
With end to grief,
With love in steadfastness.

THE BOY OUT OF CHURCH

As Jesus and his followers
  Upon a Sabbath morn
Were walking by a wheat field
  They plucked the ears of corn.

They plucked it, they rubbed it,
  They blew the husks away,
Which grieved the pious Pharisees
  Upon the Sabbath day.

And Jesus said, "A riddle
  Answer if you can,
Was man made for the Sabbath
  Or Sabbath made for man?"

I do not love the Sabbath,
  The soapsuds and the starch,
The troops of solemn people
  Who to Salvation march.

I take my book, I take my stick
  On the Sabbath day,
In woody nooks and valleys
  I hide myself away.

To ponder there in quiet
  God's Universal Plan,
Resolved that church and Sabbath
  Were never made for man.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST (b. 1892)

Miss Sackville-West is the wife of the Honorable Harold Nicolson, whose biographical studies of Verlaine, Tennyson, and Byron are well known. Miss

Sackville-West has published several novels, and three volumes of poems. The last of these, *The Land*, which appeared in 1926, gave her an important place in contemporary poetry. It is a farmer's calendar, set out in verse of great and varied beauty, showing a deep instinctive knowledge of English country life and character, and rich in landscape and seasonal change. It is one of the best long poems of this age, profoundly conceived, and vigorously sustained in expression. Its detail is very closely observed, and, moving with lyrical ease throughout, it displays a fund of special knowledge that never for a moment becomes tedious. The whole poem, from which two passages are here given, is of a character as individual as it is attractive.

BITTERNESS

Yes, they were kind exceedingly; most mild
Even in indignation, taking by the hand
One that obeyed them mutely, as a child
Submissive to a law he does not understand.

They would not blame the sins his passion wrought.
No, they were tolerant and Christian, saying, "We
Only deplore . . ." saying they only sought
To help him, strengthen him, to show him love; but he

Following them with unrecalcitrant tread,
Quiet, towards their town of kind captivities,
Having slain rebellion, ever turned his head
Over his shoulder, seeking still with his poor eyes

Her motionless figure on the road. The song
Rang still between them, vibrant bell to answering bell,
Full of young glory as a bugle; strong;
Still brave; now breaking like a sea-bird's cry "Farewell!"

And they, they whispered kindly to him "Come!
Now we have rescued you. Let your heart heal.
Forget!
She was your danger and your evil spirit." Dumb,
He listened, and they thought him acquiescent. Yet,

(Knowing the while that they were very kind)
Remembrance clamoured in him: "She was wild and
free,
Magnificent in giving; she was blind
To gain or loss, and, loving, loved but me, — but me!

"Valiant she was, and comradely, and bold;
High-mettled; all her thoughts a challenge, like gay
ships
Adventurous, with treasure in the hold.
I met her with the lesson put into my lips,

"Spoke reason to her, and she bowed her head,
Having no argument, and giving up the strife.
She said I should be free. I think she said
That, for the asking, she would give me all her life."

And still they led him onwards, and he still
Looked back towards her standing there; and they,
content,
Cheered him and praised him that he did their will.
The gradual distance hid them, and she turned and
went.

From THE LAND

The peddler and the reddleman
Go vagrant through the shires.
The peddler tempts the farmer's wife
With all she most admires,
With beads, and boxes made of shells,

With lace and huckaback,
Buckles for shoes and rings for ears,
And Old Moore's Almanack,
With tapes and bobbins, pins and thread,
"What lack you? What d'you lack?"

The reddleman from head to foot
Dyed in his scarlet dye,
Leans like the Devil on the gate,
And grins when children cry.
"Redd for your sheep to-day, shepherd?
Redd for your yoes and rams?
I never broke a tup's leg yet
Or scared the mothering dams.
You'll find me natty at my job,
And gentle with the lambs."

The tinker and the boggart both
Long since have learnt by rote
How cold the rain and sharp the wind
Drive through a ragged coat.
The tinker with his little cart,
Hawking his tinny wares,
Puts down his head against the sleet
And whimpers for repairs.
"Kind lady, patch your pots and pans,
And mend your broken chairs?"

The boggart on the frosty ridge,
His sleeveless arms held wide,
Stands gaunt against the wintry sky
Forever crucified,
A raven perched upon his hat,
About his feet the crows.
How bleak December turns the fields,
How desolate the snows,
How long the nights and short the days,
Tatterdemalion knows.

From THE LAND

Homer and Hesiod and Virgil knew
The ploughshare in its reasonable shape,
Classical from the moment it was new,
Sprung ready-armed ordained without escape,
And never bettered though man's cunning grew,
And barbarous countries joined the classic reach:
Coulter and swingletree and share and haft
Frugal of ornament as peasants' speech,
Strong to their use and simple as their craft,
Whether to turn the ridge or cleave the rean.
And as the slow Egyptian turns the dark
Loam in his narrow valley where the green
Draws the rich record of the river's mark,
Or as the Mede across his Asian plain,
Watched by the circling mountains topped with snow,
Scores the poor furrow for his meagre wheat
With wooden yoke and lurching buffalo
Pricked by the lazy goad,
And leaves his sowing to the care of God
And takes the southern road
To summer pastures, where the waters flow,
Driving his train of ponies roughly shod
And camels with grave bells, that surly go
Where immemorial caravans have trod,
Marking the trackway with their whitened bones,
His four-span waggons with their homely load,
Black curly lambs that scramble on the stones,
Startling the cricket and the crested lark,
And after summer northward moves again
To reap his harvest in the wickering heat, —
So set your English share, that as a lover tills
The breaking field, and let the blade be keen;
Brace up your hames that collars may not irk,
And urge your horses to the guiding drills,
But knot your hempen reins, and only yerk
Your team by voice, for they will strain

Against a fitful soil, and nobler work
Spared the impatient checking of the rein.
Ploughing's begun among the gentle hills;
Wide skies where cloudy cities travel white
Canopy little acres; in the blanched serene
Tent of the heaven wheel the untidy rooks,
And settle, gawky, on the browning tracks,
While man and horse pursue their ancient rite.

PART IV

CHARLOTTE MEW (1869–1928)

Charlotte Mew during her lifetime published only one small book of poems, *The Farmer's Bride*. It brought her no wide recognition, but alert critics were aware from the first that here was work of individuality and passion. A posthumous volume of her poems is to appear later, but, even so, her poetical output remains a very slender one. Nevertheless, she has achieved for herself a secure, if inconspicuous, place among the poets of her time. And the readers that she finds are always likely to be admirers.

KEN

The town is old and very steep,
A place of bells and cloisters and grey towers,
And black clad people walking in their sleep —
A nun, a priest, a woman taking flowers
To her new grave; and watched from end to end
By the great Church above, through the still hours:
Though in the morning and the early dark
The children wake and dart from doors and call
Down the wide, crooked street where, at the bend
Before it climbs up to the park,
Ken's is the gabled house facing the Castle wall.

When first I came upon him there
Suddenly, on the half-lit stair
I think I hardly found a trace
Of likeness to a human face

In his. And I said then
If in His image God made men,
Some other must have made poor Ken —
But for his eyes which looked at you
As two red wounded stars might do.

He scarcely spoke, you scarcely heard,
His voice broke off in little jars
To tears sometimes. An uncouth bird
He seemed as he ploughed up the street,
Groping, with knarred, high-lifted feet
And arms thrust out as if to beat
Always against a threat of bars.

And oftener than not there'd be
A child just higher than his knee
Trotting beside him. Through his dim
Long twilight this at least shone clear,
That all the children and the deer,
Whom every day he went to see
Out in the park, belonged to him.

"God help the folk that next him sits
He fidgets so, with his poor wits."
The neighbours said on Sunday nights
When he would go to Church to "see the lights!"
Although for these he used to fix
His eyes upon a crucifix
In a dark corner, staring on
Till everybody else had gone.
And sometimes in his evil fits,
You could not move him from his chair —
You did not look at him as he sat there,
Biting his rosary to bits.
While pointing to the Christ he tried to say
"Take it away."

Nothing was dead:
He said "a bird" if he picked up a broken wing,
A perished leaf or any such thing
Was just "a rose"; and once when I had said
He must not stand and knock there any more,
He left a twig on the mat outside my door.

Not long ago
The last thrush stiffened in the snow,
While black against a sullen sky
The sighing pines stood by.
But now the wind has left our rattled pane
To flutter the hedge-sparrow's wing.
The birches in the wood are red again,
And only yesterday
The larks went up a little way to sing
What lovers say
Who loiter in the lanes to-day;
The buds begin to talk of May
With learned rooks on city trees,
And if God please
With all of these
We too shall see another Spring.

But in that red brick barn upon the hill
I wonder can one own the deer,
And does one walk with children still
As one did here —
Do roses grow
Beneath those twenty windows in a row —
And if some night
When you have not seen any light
They cannot move you from your chair
What happens there?
I do not know.

So when they took
Ken to that place, I did not look

After he called and turned on me
His eyes. These I shall see —

THE PEDLAR

Lend me, a little while, the key
That locks your heavy heart, and I'll give you back —
Rarer than books and ribbons and beads bright to see,
This little Key of Dreams out of my pack.

The road, the road, beyond men's bolted doors,
There shall I walk and you go free of me,
For yours lies North across the moors,
And mine South. To what sea?

How if we stopped and let our solemn selves go by,
While my gay ghost caught and kissed yours, as ghosts don't do,
And by the wayside this forgotten you and I
Sat, and were twenty-two?

Give me the key that locks your tired eyes,
And I will lend you this one from my pack,
Brighter than coloured beads and painted books that make men wise:
Take it. No, give it back!

THE FARMER'S BRIDE

Three Summers since I chose a maid,
Too young maybe — but more's to do
At harvest-time than bide and woo.
When us was wed she turned afraid
Of love and me and all things human;
Like the shut of a winter's day.
Her smile went out, and 'twasn't a woman —
More like a little frightened fay.
One night, in the Fall, she runned away.

"Out 'mong the sheep, her be," they said,
'Should properly have been abed;
But sure enough she wasn't there
Lying awake with her wide brown stare.
So over seven-acre field and up-along across the down
We chased her, flying like a hare
Before our lanterns. To Church-Town
All in a shiver and a scare
We caught her, fetched her home at last
And turned the key upon her, fast.

She does the work about the house
As well as most, but like a mouse:
Happy enough to chat and play
With birds and rabbits and such as they,
So long as men-folk keep away.
"Not near, not near!" her eyes beseech
When one of us comes within reach.
The women say that beasts in stall
Look round like children at her call.
I've hardly heard her speak at all.

Shy as a leveret, swift as he,
Straight and slight as a young larch tree,
Sweet as the first wild violets, she,
To her wild self. But what to me?

The short days shorten and the oaks are brown,
The blue smoke rises to the low grey sky,
One leaf in the still air falls slowly down,
A magpie's spotted feathers lie
On the black earth spread white with rime,
The berries redden up to Christmas-time.
What's Christmas-time without there be
Some other in the house than we!

She sleeps up in the attic there
Alone, poor maid. 'Tis but a stair

Betwixt us. Oh! my God! the down,
The soft young down of her, the brown,
The brown of her — her eyes, her hair, her hair!

J. REDWOOD ANDERSON (b. 1883)

Mr. Redwood Anderson is an English schoolmaster with an American descent. Among his ancestors he counts Abraham Redwood, who sailed for America in the reign of Queen Anne, and was the founder of the Redwood Library at Newport, Rhode Island; and also William Ellery, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. In his middle age he is slowly coming to the recognition that his work as a poet warrants, and it is founded on qualities that will more and more assert themselves to readers of poetry. Mr. Anderson works on a liberal scale of conceptions and in a large manner. In a preface written for his long dramatic poem *Babel*, Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie rightly noted that no contemporary poet was seeking with more success to give a profound philosophic basis to his poetry. This philosophical element distinguishes even Mr. Anderson's shorter treatment of the common traffic of the streets. His work is never touched by triviality.

THE CRANE

It stuns
The rapt attention, and it lifts
More than its load of many tons;
More than the turbine swung on high
So easily,
A toy
In its great grasp of steel.
It lifts my heart to feel
Joy in all human effort — joy

In its clear lines of loveliness;
For Beauty is the gesture of victorious Might,
And Strength exultant in success
Fashions the world's delight.
It shifts
More than the quarried cube of stone
From the fixed earth to the unfixèd sea —
It moves my very spirit, which had grown
One with the unmoving earth, and sets it free
On the free oceans where adventure goes
Who knows
To what far glory? So, the old spell breaking,
Thought, from his deep enchantment waking,
Casts off the chains of what has been — regrets,
Fears, hesitations, doubts — and sets
Out on fresh voyage. And the crane
With its fast grapnels lays
Hold of my heart and lifts it up in praise,
Praise of the human hand
That made it and the human brain
That planned.

A hundred feet, the tower
Rears its light frame of girder and tie;
And through its interlaced
Black lines
The blue June sky
In lozenge and triangle shines.
It stands foursquare,
Tenoned in concrete, rooted in rock,
Rigid, efficient, spare,
The minimum of work and waste,
The maximum of power.
Iron ladders run
Steeply aloft — a stair
Climbing above the river and the town;
A sharp ascent into a purer air,

Into a clearer sun.
Far down
Between the girders, street and roof
Appear tilted — far off a weather-cock,
As to some comrade like itself aloof
From the flat round of things,
Signals "Ahoy!" and flings
The flags of sunlight in a flash of signs.
It sees the first long-drawn
Streamer of smoke, ere round the distant river-bend
The steamer comes in sight;
It is the first to cry the dawn
"Good morrow!" and, at the day's end,
The first to see the first star's light.

Then, on the Atlas-shoulders of its strength
It bears the far-reached jib out-swung,
An arm of abrupt metal flung
Full in the empty face of space;
An abrupt length
Of bridge stretched over an abyss
And leading nowhere; an immense
Menace of steel that like some half-heard fate
Sweeps round to dominate
Its wide circumference.
And on this highway, to and fro,
With steady movement slow
The crab
Crawls on its claw-like sprawl of wheel;
While, like a hooded serpent with curved fangs,
The cable with its tackle hangs
And its twin hooks below.
And it will grip and it will move
Now this, now that enormous weight,
With infinite precision — as if love
Had made its touch so delicate;
And it will lower, with the grace

Of absolute ease, huge stacks and great
Engines, and fit them into place
Not one sixteenth of a small inch amiss.

Under the jib the cab
Clings as the nests of swallows cling
To the slant eaves of houses. There, alone,
He sits, who is the soul
Of this vast body of steel,
And everything
In this vast body — chain,
Cable, and hook, and wheel,
Ratchet, and brake, and the geared motors — feel
His calm-deliberate control.
His hand
Moves, and the giant structure thrills
Instant obedience to his will's
Command;
While from the cab, as from the brain
Nerves run to the least cell,
Wires,
Threading the monstrous whole,
Flash to all parts, from that small citadel,
Inaudible mandates to make known
Mankind's desires.

For man, who is so weak a thing,
Assumes thereby
Mighty extension and titanic force;
And in colossal stature towers
Matched with the primal powers
Of nature in sublime equality —
Thereby,
Godlike, he ordains the course
Of subject destiny.

It stuns
The rapt attention; and it lifts

More than its load of many tons.
It lifts the blocks of circumstance
Hewn in the quarried hills of chance,
Wherewith to fling across the deep
Of chaos the rebellious, steep
And perilous causeway of the world's advance.
It lifts the engineries
By which man's vast adventures steam,
Like ships, upon the seas
Of fabulous sunset and moon-bewildered dream.
It lifts the guns
Of his armed science, by whose might
He holds at bay the invading fleets of pain,
And to the plain
Levels the fortresses of night.
It lifts one step, one step, above
Their dangerous and heroic place,
The faith, the hope, the fortitude, the love
And tragic splendour of the human race.

HEAT

The heat was like a solid thing
Pressed down in heavy layer on layer,
It seemed a miracle that there
A small bird moved its wing
In that unmoving air.

And every leaf upon the tree,
And every stem, and every blade
Of grass seemed made
Of clear-cut malachite;
And not a seed, however light
And wonderfully winged for flight,
Was free
To seek new fortune far away —
But where it fell it lay,

A crystal of pure loveliness
Embedded in the amber stress
And solid radiance of the day.

The gables of the houses seemed
Like monks that dreamed
Withdrawn in hushed immovable retreat —
While in the gardens at their feet
Blossomed the sweet
Pleasure of earth and earthly pride
Their burning dream denied.

And every bush was like a queen
Who sat in robes of folded green
With listless hands and gaze;
Her hair in lilac shadows hung
About the silence of her face;
And the laburnum-gold
Was sequins manifold
In showers
Over her bosom flung;
And all the flowers
Were drops of metal bright,
Or the still light
Of jewelled ornaments unbound
And fallen to the ground.

The smoke from one dim chimney rose,
A thin straight line, to spread
Its dusky leafage overhead;
The smoke was like a tree,
One solitary palm that grows
Beside a silent sea.

The heat was like a solid mass
On breathless lawn and stifled town —
It seemed a miracle that I

Could move my feet upon the grass,
Or look to see if, in the sky,
It was indeed the sun
That shone,
And not a burning ball of steel
That weighed the whole world down.

THE FISH-CART

Only the shock
Of earthquake could make move these stiff
Houses and this unyielding street!
They are like walls of cliff,
But at their feet
No ocean
With beautiful ever-varying foam;
Only sheet on sheet
Of rock.
Nor is there any motion
In the steel-grey
Heavens that with their dome
Roof the day.

O for the ripple of blown grasses
To break this immobility!
O for a single tree
To shake as the wind passes!

Then, suddenly, my mind is full
Of moving waters beautiful;
A sweet
Cool breath plays on my face and hands;
My naked feet
Sink in the hot surrender of dry sands,
While foam voluptuously dances in white sarabands.
The billows, weary with long laughter, fling
Their weak limbs panting on the shore;

I hear again the roar
And plunge of breakers, and once more
Feel the whipped spray
Sting.

That is the sniff
Of seaweed when green tides
Cluck and swish
Round the dark tangled posts of piers;
I fill with life as I inhale
The shouting passage of the wet west gale.
Years
Drop from my shoulders! I again
Watch the reefed sails
Strain
Shining where the ship rides!
And all around
Is moving light and moving sound . . .

A cry breaks on my ears —
A hawker passing — and his cart is bright
With the weed-green and bubble-white,
Shimmering cool scales
Of fish!

THE CARAVAN

The road, the hedge, the trees,
Blue sky, green earth, and summer peace.

The sun is like a silver shield
That lies,
Left by some hero of the skies,
Upon the day's victorious field.

The hedge is like the thoughts of him
Whose ways are safe and free from stress,

Who cannot see beyond the rim
Of his own blessedness.

The trees are like the sentinels
Of immemorial mystery,
And each one dwells
Inviolate in secrecy.

Suddenly, road, and hedge, and trees,
Blue sky, green earth, are blotted out —
A loud
Hammer of sound shatters the fragile peace;
And lo,
Where, moving slow,
Obscure in smoke, chaotic through the cloud
Of whirling dust, with many a curse and shout,
A traction-engine grinds its way along!

O the wild song
Of the swift fly-wheel where it spins unseen!
O the confused, wild peal
Of laughter from the piston-rods of steel!
The scream
Of furious steam!
And, after, a long, lumbering line,
— O how the fittings shine
In brass and glass! and every wheel
Painted bright,
Yellow and red and blue and green —
The caravan!

Here are the booths of many a fair
Packed up and stacked with rope and stay;
Here swing the lamps that, with their flare
Of naphtha-light,
Throw monstrous shadows across the square,
And turn the night

Into a glaring mask of day;
Here is the organ, crude and loud,
To draw the crowd
With gay
Tympanum-clash and trumpet-blare.

Here is the lofty pole and bright,
Where he who can
May swing —
And again swing —
The hammer, till he ring
The bell that winks upon the height,
And prove himself a man;
Here, with her huge mouth opened wide,
"Aunt Sally" gapes upon the country side;
And there a cage
Confines a tiger and his golden rage.

And here,
The horses of desire! the ships of fear!
Horses that sweep the soul, sublime,
Beyond the rims of space and time;
And ship on ship
Of strange adventure — how they fly,
And roll and dip,
Under what glare of whirling sky,
On what fantastic maelström-lip.
O flashing prows that plunge and strain
Round and around and back again!
O flashing steeds that plunge and prance,
Insane,
Down all the lighted highways of romance!

And here
A house on wheels brings up the rear —
And through the doorway you may spy
A hand, a movement, or the glance

Of a quick, furtive eye;
And there,
Perched on the caravan's last stair,
A monkey with red coat and gleaming metal chain.

The cloud of dust sweeps up and round,
Enveloping the waggon-train;
Already with a duller sound
The traction-engine grinds into the plain;
The dust-cloud settles, now the trees stand clear,
And now again
The hedge, the road, and the green fields appear.

The sun is like a hole of light
Pierced by a bullet in its flight
In the blue tent
Which is the firmament.

The hedge is like a vagabond
That goes his way without a pack,
That goes, and never once turns back,
To the world's twilight and beyond.

The trees are like old men who stand
Before their doorways in the sun,
To watch, under a shaking hand,
The way that youth has gone.

The road, the hedge, the trees,
Blue sky, green earth, and summer peace.

FRANCES CORNFORD (b. 1886)

Mrs. Cornford has published but two or three slender books of verse, but they establish her as one of the representative poets of her time. Rarely extending her

work beyond the scope of the short lyric, almost every poem she writes is enlivened by sensitive and enquiring touches that are her own secret. The grand-daughter of Charles Darwin, and the wife of Francis Cornford, one of the ablest classical scholars produced by Cambridge in recent times, Mrs. Cornford has been content to send out a small book once and again at long intervals, and leave it at that. But every new reader she finds is likely to remain a loyal one. Quality of her kind is not easily forgotten.

AUTUMN MORNING AT CAMBRIDGE

I RAN out in the morning, when the air was clean and new
And all the grass was glittering, and grey with autumn dew,
I ran out to the apple tree and pulled an apple down,
And all the bells were ringing in the old grey town.

Down in the town, off the bridges and the grass
They are sweeping up the leaves to let the people pass,
Sweeping up the old leaves, golden-reds and browns,
While the men go to lecture with the wind in their gowns.

TO A FAT LADY SEEN FROM THE TRAIN

O WHY do you walk through the fields in gloves,
Missing so much and so much?
O fat white woman whom nobody loves,
Why do you walk through the fields in gloves,
When the grass is soft as the breast of doves
And shivering sweet to the touch?
O why do you walk through the fields in gloves,
Missing so much and so much?

THE OLD WITCH IN THE COPSE

I AM a Witch, and a kind old Witch,
There's many a one knows that —
Alone I live in my little dark house
With Pillycock, my cat.

A girl came running through the night,
When all the winds blew free: —
"O mother, change a young man's heart
That will not look on me.

O mother, brew a magic mead
To stir his heart so cold."
"Just as you will, my dear," said I;
"And I thank you for your gold."

So here am I in the wattled copse
Where all the twigs are brown,
To find what I need to brew my mead
As the dark of night comes down.

Primroses in my old hands,
Sweet to smell and young,
And violets blue that spring in the grass
Wherever the larks have sung.

With celandines as heavenly crowns
Yellowy-gold and bright;
All of these, O all of these,
Shall bring her Love's delight.

But orchids growing snakey green
Speckled dark with blood,
And fallen leaves that curled and shrank
And rotted in the mud,

With blistering nettles burning harsh
And blinding thorns above;
All of these, O all of these
Shall bring the pains of Love.

Shall bring the pains of Love, my Puss,
That cease not night or day,
The bitter rage, nought can assuage
Till it bleeds the heart away.

Pillycock mine, my hands are full
My pot is on the fire.
Purr, my pet, this fool shall get
Her fool's desire.

THE OLD NURSE

I AM an old woman, comfortable, calm and wise
Often I see the spirits of the dead with my own eyes.
They come into my house. I am no more afraid
Than of the coal-scuttle or my breakfast newly laid.
One night over the fields the wind blew wild,
And I thought I heard in it the ravaging voice of a child.
Coldly and wild it swept over the cold lands,
Like the voice of a child who suddenly misses those only hands
That understood to make him safe, usual, warm.
And it cried and cried, and I knew it was not the voice of the storm.
I tried to fall asleep; but how could I sleep,
And hear that little desperate thing continually weep?
Then to the grown spirits imploringly I said:
"Friends, give to me that new spirit who is lately dead,
Who cannot enter your strange world of light
Because he misses the hands of his mother this first night,

And she, poor soul, lies weeping tear on tear
And cannot pierce the night with love. But I hear.
Give me her wandering child!" Then, as I lay in bed,
Against my breast I felt a small and blunt-nosed head,
And a sob-quivering body slowly growing calm
And toes like round cold buds that warmed inside my palm.
Then in the warmth and hush, and in the darkness deep,
That little comforted spirit sighed and fell asleep,
And I slept too, most satisfied, until
I woke and found the morrow's light, everywhere cold and still.
But out of my white bed where morning shone
Away from my enclosing arms the little spirit was gone.
Ungrieving I knew, he was no more afraid,
But, in the new world's light, with new toys played.

HUMBERT WOLFE (b. 1885)

Though Mr. Wolfe as quite a young man published a volume of verse that he now regards as an indiscretion, it was not until his maturity that he first claimed serious consideration as a poet, so that, although he is now past forty, he is in a sense regarded as a member of the very youngest school. Not that in strict terms he belongs to any school, since his verse takes up the great tradition with ease for his own purposes. In the course of four or five years he has added volume to volume in rapid succession, and each has revealed a rich and most engaging fertility of mind. From nursery rhymes to full-length satire, from harlequinade to psychological epic, and from lampoons to translations of the Greek anthology, he has moved with a facility that has never become merely facile. He has quickly won a high reputation, and it is founded on genuine desert.

ILIAD

False dreams, all false,
mad heart, were yours,
The word, and nought else,
in time endures.
Not you long after,
perished and mute,
will last, but the defter
viol and lute,
Sweetly they'll trouble
the listeners
with the cold dropped pebble
of painless verse.
Not you will be offered,
but the poet's false pain.
Mad heart, you have suffered,
and loved in vain.
What joy doth Helen
or Paris have
Where these lie still in
a nameless grave?
Her beauty's a wraith,
and the boy Paris
muffles in death
his mouth's cold cherries.
Aye! these are less,
that were love's summer,
than one gold phrase
of old blind Homer?
Not Helen's wonder
nor Paris stirs,
but the bright untender
hexameters.
And thus, all passion
is nothing made,
but a star to flash in
an Iliad.

Mad heart, you were wrong!
No love of yours,
but only what is sung,
when love's over, endures.

NOT FOR MY TEARS

Not for my tears, your beauty's interest,
nor for my hopes, its trifling dividend,
shall I remembered be, O loveliest!
Not for my wit, which seeks in vain to spend
your laughter's silver coinage, newly prest
and shining from the Mint, nor, in the end,
though I your golden grace in words invest,
shall I recoup a tithe of what you lend.
No! not for tears, nor hopes, nor wit, nor verse,
but for my love, though unreturned, allowed
shall I be ranged among the lesser stars,
by pale Narcissus with his water-flowers
drowned, or with crooked Vulcan thunder-browed,
when his bright lady cheated him with Mars.

THE OLD LADY

The old, old lady,
that nobody knows,
sits in the Garden
shelter, and sews.

Save for her restless
fingers she
is cold and still
as ivory.

The chestnut-blossom,
blown on her dress,
seems only a sculptor's
cleverness.

THE SOLDIER

I

Down some cold field in a world unspoken
the young men are walking together, slim and tall,
and though they laugh to one another, silence is not broken:
there is no sound however clear they call.

They are speaking together of what they loved in vain here,
but the air is too thin to carry the thing they say.
They were young and golden, but they came on pain here,
and their youth is age now, their gold is grey.

Yet their hearts are not changed, and they cry to one another,
"What have they done with the lives we laid aside?
Are they young with our youth, gold with our gold, my brother?
Do they smile in the face of death, because we died?"

Down some cold field in a world uncharted
the young seek each other with questioning eyes.
They question each other, the young, the golden-hearted,
of the world that they were robbed of in their quiet Paradise.

THE SOLDIER

II

I do not ask God's purpose. He gave me the sword,
and though merely to wield it is itself the lie
against the light, at the bidding of my Lord,
where all the rest bear witness, I'll deny.

And I remember Peter's high reward,
and say of soldiers, when I hear cocks cry,
"As your dear lives ('twas all you might afford)
you laid aside, I lay my sainthood by."
There are in heaven other archangels,
bright friends of God, who build where Michael destroys,
in music, or in beauty, lute-players.
I wield the sword; and, though I ask naught else
of God, I pray to Him: "But these were boys,
and died. Be gentle, God, to soldiers."

THE HIGH SONG

The high song is over. Silent is the lute now.
They are crowned for ever and discrowned now.
Whether they triumphed or suffered they are mute now,
or at the most they are only a sound now.

The high song is over. There is none to complain now.
No heart for healing, and none to break now.
They have gone, and they will not come again now.
They are sleeping at last, and they will not wake now.

The high song is over. And we shall not mourn now.
There was a thing to say, and it is said now.
It is as though all these had been unborn now,
it is as though the world itself were dead now.

The high song is over. Even the echoes fail now;
winners and losers — they are only a theme now,
their victory and defeat a half-forgotten tale now;
and even the angels are only a dream now.

There is no need for blame, no cause for praise now.
Nothing to hide, to change or to discover.
They were men and women. They have gone their ways now,
as men and women must. The high song is over.

CHARLES WILLIAMS (b. 1886)

Mr. Williams has yet to find the public that he deserves, but with work of such uniform excellence as is to be found in his three volumes, *Poems of Conformity*, *Divorce*, and *Windows of the Night*, he is certain to be well served by time. He can make a simple rhyme as enchantingly as any one, but of all the younger poets he has perhaps the most genuinely mystical imagination. He is not always a very easy poet to read, but this is due neither to obscurity nor dullness. His mind is really going on its own adventures, and unless we are very alert he will sometimes outpace us in unfamiliar country. But to read poetry idly is almost as bad as to write it so, and to be reasonably quick witted in Mr. Williams's company is to gather many rewards.

AFTER RONSARD

When you are old, and I — if that should be —
  Lying afar in undistinguished earth,
And you no more have all your will of me,
  To teach me morals, idleness, and mirth,
But, curtained from the bleak December nights,
  You sit beside the else-deserted fire
And 'neath the glow of double-polèd lights,
  Till your alert eyes and quick judgement tire,
Turn some new poet's page, and to yourself
  Praise his new satisfaction of new need,
Then pause and look a little toward the shelf
  Where my books stand which none but you shall read:
And say: "I too was not ungently sung
When I was happy, beautiful, and young."

WALKING SONG

Here we go a-walking, so softly, so softly,
  Down the world, round the world, back to London town,

To see the waters and the whales, the emus and the mandarins,
To see the Chinese mandarins, each in a silken gown.

Here we go a-walking, so softly, so softly,
Out by holy Glastonbury, back to London town,
Before a cup, a shining cup, a cup of beating crimson,
To see Saint Joseph saying mass all with a shaven crown.

And round him are the silly things of hoof and claw and feather,
Upon his right the farmyard, upon his left the wild;
All the lambs of all the folds bleat out the Agnus Dei,
And when he says the holy words he holds the holy Child.

Here we go a-walking, so softly, so softly,
Through the vast Atlantic waves, back to London town,
To see the ships made whole again that sank below the tempest,
The Trojan and Phœnician ships that long ago went down.

And there are sailors keeping watch on many a Roman galley,
And silver bars and golden bars and mighty treasure hid,
And splendid Spanish gentlemen majestically walking
And waiting on their admiral as once in far Madrid.

Here we go a-walking, so softly, so softly,
Down and under to New York back to London town,
To see the face of Liberty that smiles upon all children,
But when too soon they come of age she answers with a frown.

And there are all the dancing stars beside the toppling windows,
Human lights and heavenly lights they twinkle side by side;
There is passing through the street the mighty voice of Jefferson
And the armies of George Washington who would not be denied.

Here we go a-walking, so softly, so softly,
O'er the wide Tibetan plains, back to London town,
To see the youthful Emperor among his seventy princes,
Who bears the mystic sceptre, who wears the mystic crown.

The tongue he speaks is older far than Hebrew or than Latin,
And ancient rituals drawn therein his eyes of mercy con;
About his throne the candles shine and thuribles of incense
Are swung about his footstool, and his name is Prester John.

Here we go ā-walking, so softly, so softly,
Down the pass of Himalay, back to London town,
To see our lord most pitiful, the holy Prince Siddartha,
And the Peacock Throne of Akbar, and great Timur riding down.

Up to Delhi, up to Delhi! lo the Mogul's glory,
Twice ten thousand elephants trumpet round his tent;
Down from Delhi, down from Delhi! lo the leafy budh-tree
Where our lord at the fourth watch achieved enlightenment.

Here we go a-walking, so softly, so softly,
  Through the jungles African, back to London town,
To see the shining rivers and the drinking-place by moonlight,
  And the lions and hyenas and the zebras coming down:

To see bright birds and butterflies, the monstrous hippopotami,
  The silent secret crocodiles that keep their ancient guile,
The white road of the caravans that stretches o'er Sahara,
  And the Pharaoh in his litter at the fording of the Nile.

Here we go a-walking, so softly, so softly,
  Up the holy streets of Rome, back to London town,
To see the marching legions and the Consuls in their triumph,
  And the moving lips of Virgil and the laurel of his crown:

And there is Cæsar pacing to the foot of Pompey's statue,
  All scornful of his mastery, all careless of alarms;
And there the Pope goes all in white among his scarlet Cardinals
  And carried on the shoulders of his gentlemen-at-arms.

Here we go a-walking, so softly, so softly,
  Up the hills of Hampstead, back to London town,
And the garden gate stands open and the house door swings before us,
  And the candles twinkle happily as we lie down.

For here the noble lady is who meets us from our wanderings,
Here are all the sensible and very needful things,
Here are blankets, here is milk, here are rest and slumber,
And the courteous prince of angels with the fire about his wings.

TO MICHAL MEDITATING A NEW COSTUME

THOUGH experts make to-day the dress
That shall enclose your loveliness,
And, marvellous in art, contrive
To make your beauty more alive,
They have no stuff and cannot sew
The clothes to suit you when you go
Among all ladies fair and dear
To keep the May of our New Year.

Then all the world and heaven shall see
Your pleasant gown of chastity;
Your hat, in that celestial weather,
Shall have a close-trimmed phœnix' feather,
Or, gathered from that joyous Spring,
A rose-bud, real and undying, —
As fashion still perchance be there
Of love or wisdom: you shall bear
A parasol of sweet concern
For others, lest the Sun should burn
Too dark your brilliant countenance,
And dazzle your sun-borrowed glance;
But, since no storms are there to heed,
Within those walks you shall not need,
Nor lose, umbrellas any more:
You will not trouble much the store
Of jewels, as you do not here,

Only your finger still shall bear
The single glowing ruby of
Your passionate immortal love.

A comb of duty in your hair
Shall prove your diligence and care
To have your beauty dressed aright
Only to give our host delight;
Your handkerchief of laces, which
The world's delight in you made rich,
You then must carry for display,
Since upon our high feast of May
Shall be no tears to wipe away;
Your gloves of smooth discretion shall
Suit well that place magnifical,
And on that sward your feet shall be
Compactly shod with industry.

PETER QUENNELL (b. 1905)

If Thomas Hardy might have been the father of almost the next oldest poet in our selection, he might easily have been Mr. Peter Quennell's great-grandfather. I have chosen this youngest of our poets as representative of the talent that in this coming generation may be expected to deal worthily by the traditions of English poetry. I do not think that Mr. Peter Quennell in his published work has yet found himself, but he has made it abundantly clear, that he has in him something very much worth finding. His thought and his idiom are at present perhaps a little exotic and remote, but they are vivid and full of invention, and with maturing experience they should reward the hopes that are founded on a remarkable promise.

LEVIATHAN

I

Leviathan drives the eyed prow of his face,
With the surge dumbly rippling round his lips,
Toward the Atlantid shore;
Not flat and golden like the Cherubim,
Or a face round and womanish like the Seraphim,
But thick and barbed — the broad, barbed cheeks of
Donne.

Beneath he stretched his hands to the sea forests,
Obscure and thick, with the cool freshes under,
Lifts his surprised brows to the sky's milky light,
New come from the abyss.

While a faint radiance, webbed from the waves' sub-
stance,
Clung to his changing limbs and his coiled body,
Reddening, making them darker than the sea,
Or half translucent.

And when the mouths of Atlantean brooks
Struck on his mouth with taste of sudden cold
And wound his shoulders like embracing hands,
He put out both thick palms and felt the shallows.

The salt had scurfed his body with white fire
And knotted the rough hair between his breasts,
And as he rose delicate Atlantis trembled,
Tilting upon the sea's plain like a leaf.

The passionless air hung heavy on Atlantis,
And the inclined spears of the flowering bushes
Smoothly dropped down their loosened, threaded petals,
Softening the pathways.

For tideless night had covered her, and sealed
All scent within the narrow throat of flowers,
And sound within the navel of the hills,
And stars in the confusion of the air.

Within her darkness and unconsciousness
She hid all beauty, and her silences
Sound's measures and sequences,
And the black earth quickened
With oppression of blossom.

Ah, thief that swims by night — Leviathan,
Rolled blindly in the wave's trough like a rotting thing,
Come to Atlantis' further edge by dark,
Poised over her quietness;

Measureless drunkard of the bitter sea,
Insatiate, like some slow stain
Creeping on pleasure's face,
Like sudden misery.

So foul, so desolate,
That you are crept to seek new life,
Have crossed the water's plain,
Desiring and by stealth to gain
For rankness, foolishness and half-conceivéd beauty
Some perfect shape — an Atlantean body.

II

A Music met Leviathan returning,
While the still troubled waters of his passage
Danct every island like a lily head.
Through all the shadowed throats of the wide forest
His unnumbered monster children rode to greet him
On horses winged and dappled over like flowers.

Now huddled waves had lulled their bursting foam
And slight clouds laid their breasts upon the sea;

The sullen winds, head downward from the sky,
Solicited his movement on their viols.

And the palm trees, heat weary,
Chafing smooth limbs within a rinded shell,
Spoke of his coming with soft acclamation,
Like watchers long grown tired, languid and sorry:

"Look, how he comes" — as faint as whispering deer —
"What storm and state he brings." Then louder voices,
The unchaste turtles crying out with pleasure,
And badgers from the earth
Sprawled upon the rocks with animal laughter.

"The Cretan bull ferrying across the sea
Bore home no richer load;
In the reed forest of Eurotas' bank
That quivering swan, clapping strong wings together,
With harsh, sweet voice called out no keener marriage."

Then shrill response, as seeming from the air,
Invoking joy, summoning desire:

"Hither desires,
Coming as thick and hot as the press and hurry of blood
Striking the apse of the brain,
Ranging abroad, carrying your torches high,
Running as light and remote as a scattered cast of pearls."

Then antic spirits from the tulip trees:

"We must have tumblers like a wheel of fire.
We must have dancers moving their suave hands:
The tumblers strung backward like a hoop
Until they thrust vermilioned cheeks between their knees.

And the intricacy
Of sweet involving gaiety,
And wine to warm our innocence,
Music to sooth the prickled sense,
Sounding like water or like ringing glass."

The mitred Queen of Heaven stirred on her broad, low throne,
Setting the lattice just so much ajar
That wandering airs from earth should cool the room,
Peered down on more-than-Leda and smoothed her wrinkled snood,
Crying to her Father-Spouse — "Dear Lord, how sweet she looks."

The clumsy hierarchies,
Wearied by their continual task of praise,
Rested wide heifer eyes upon her fallen lids.
Islanded in stars,
Even the keen Intelligences turned away
From the mathematic splendour of the spheres' incessant, rolling chime.

Himself, the Father moved,
Traditional and vast,
Remembering fresher years,
Might have inclined his steeply pinnacled head,
But his more zealous son,
As neat as Thammuz, with smooth, pallid cheeks,
Sensing an evil, shut the casement fast.

But I, remembering Atlantis, wept,
Remembering her paths and their unswept flowers,
Clean beaches, patterned by a light sea wrack,
And the ruined halcyon nests that came on shore.

Tears, in their freedom, cloud the eyes,
Drowsing the sense.
Honey and poppy equally mixed together,
They cannot drug away or curtain off with sleep
So many crowding faces,
Such pitiless disharmony of shapes.

THE DIVERS

Ah, look,
How sucking their last sweetness from the air
These divers run upon the pale sea verge;
An evening air so smooth my hand could round
And grope a circle of the hollow sky
Without a harshness or impediment.

Look now,
How they run cowering and each unknots
A rag, a girdle twisted on his loins,
Stands naked, quivered in the cool of night.

As boldest lovers will tire presently,
When dawn dries up a radiance on the limbs,
And lapse to common sleep,
To the deep tumult of habitual dreams,
Each sighing, with loosened limbs, as if regretfully,
Gives up his body to the foamless surge.

Water combs out his body, and he sinks
Beyond all form and sound.
Only the blood frets on,
Grown fearful, in a shallow dissonance.

Water strains on his hair and drums upon his flank,
Consumes his curious track
And straight or sinuous path
Dissolves as swift, impermanent as light.

Still his strange purpose drives him, like a beam,
Like the suspended shaft of cavern-piercing sun;
And, hardier still,
With wavering hands divides the massive gloom, —
A vast caress through which he penetrates,
Or obscure death withdrawing
Veil upon veil,
Discovering new darkness and profounder terror.

"Consider you your loss,
For now what strength of foot or hand
Can take you by the narrow way you came
Through the clear darkness up again and up.
Watch a procession of the living days,
Where dawn and evening melt so soft together
As wine in water, or milk shed in water,
Filming and clouding into even dullness."

"Who weeps me now with pulse of noisy tears,
Who strikes the breast?
If I regret among the flowing weed,
My regret is
Not vocal, cannot pierce to hidden day,
Momentary, soon quenched, like a strangled flame."

AMERICAN POETRY SINCE 1900

FOREWORD

The problem of such an anthology as the present one is how to exemplify a wide range of work by judicious selection. In examining the amount of poetry written in America, even since the World War, a great many competent artificers present themselves. The rekindling of interest in the art just prior to the War, both on the part of new and vigorous practitioners and on the part of the general public, resulted in manifold volumes. That period dated from 1912, and in the dozen years preceding, a number of new poetic reputations in America had already been firmly established.

Richard Hovey was, perhaps, the most salient American poet before 1900, in which year he died. Yet he was never of the literary stature of William Vaughn Moody, acknowledged subsequently as the best of our then contemporary poets until, after his death in 1910, the work of Edwin Arlington Robinson gradually reached the ascendency it holds to-day. Though one leader follows the other, and though Robinson and Moody seem to belong to different periods, the truth is that both were born in the same year, the natal year also of Edgar Lee Masters and George Sterling.

The editors of the American division of this anthology feel it fitting that its first section should be led by William Vaughn Moody. But the arrangement of this and other sections is not strictly chronological. Rather it has been thought advisable to group the poets roughly according to the period in which they seem most properly to belong, as it is reflected in their work. Hence Ridgely Torrence and Robert Frost, though both born in the same year, will be found in different sections; and the work of Professor Woodberry and of Edwin Mark-

ham, though they were born respectively fourteen and seventeen years before Moody, does not precede his work in our arrangement because, in our opinion, they are lesser poets. Woodberry's first important collection, *The Flight*, appeared in 1900 and Markham's first two books just prior and just subsequent to that year. The year 1900 was the date of Moody's first published work, *The Masque of Judgment*, a poetic drama. These three poets therefore, properly begin our arrangement of selections. Robinson had really preceded them with a privately printed book in 1896 and with *The Children of the Night* in 1897, but so slow, though steady, has been the growth of his reputation with the public, that only in the last few years has his true stature been recognized. He therefore belongs most distinctly to our second section, as its leader.

In our arrangement we have alternated the work of women with the work of men, but have, for the most part, grouped the sexes together. The revision and re-revision of the editors' original manuscript has resulted in the exclusion of many good and even excellent poets. This is to be regretted, but there seemed no other course to pursue in order to reduce the original mass of material to proportions fitting a book of this size. Only those writers have been chosen, whose work best illustrates an important tendency or is of pronounced individuality. An appendix of names and of poem titles has been added with reference to each main section. This the reader may follow for an introduction to other prominent writers, examples of whose work would have been included had space permitted.

From the work of those we conceive the most important American poets since 1900 we have endeavored to choose enough poems fully to illustrate their various predominant qualities. Occasionally we have not been able, for financial reasons, to include as much as we should have desired. Because we were unable to secure

permission to reprint them, we have been obliged, also, to omit the poems which we wished to include from Edgar Lee Masters's *Spoon River Anthology*. A short note indicating the special significance of each poet will be found in the proper place. We believe our selection to be entirely representative in its main outlines. Certain personal predilections have inevitably entered into it, despite the effort to be entirely judicial and impartial. But this is the case with all anthologists. One can only view an art according to one's own particular vision.

W. R. B.

PART I

WILLIAM VAUGHN MOODY (1869–1910)

Moody properly begins our period, from 1900 on, when Richard Hovey, our most distinguished American poet just prior to that time, had finished singing. Moody died at an age when the seasoned poet is popularly supposed to be in the fullest possession of his powers. He was but just turned forty. In his poetic dramas, *The Fire Bringer* (founded on the Prometheus legend) and *The Masque of Judgment*, and in his prose plays, one of which, *The Great Divide*, attained to success upon the stage, he evinced an unusual dramatic power. He was a more cultivated poet than Hovey and a finer workman. He is still of stature. One is advised to read his published letters to catch the highly original spirit and the buoyant sensitivity of the man. His hatred of social injustice shows particularly in *Gloucester Moors*, and was, throughout his life, a burning fire in his heart. He was a graduate of Harvard and taught at Chicago University. He traveled abroad, and the salience of his personality enriched the lives of many friends. Had his health held and circumstances been favorable, Moody might have developed into one of the major poets of the world. There are great indications in his work, greater perhaps than in that of any American poet living to-day. *The Poems and Poetic Dramas of William Vaughn Moody* were published by Houghton Mifflin Company in 1912, in two volumes.

GLOUCESTER MOORS

A mile behind is Gloucester town
Where the fishing fleets put in,

A mile ahead the land dips down
And the woods and farms begin.
Here, where the moors stretch free
In the high blue afternoon,
Are the marching sun and talking sea,
And the racing winds that wheel and flee
On the flying heels of June.

Jill-o'er-the-ground is purple blue,
Blue is the quaker-maid,
The wild geranium holds its dew
Long in the boulder's shade.
Wax-red hangs the cup
From the huckleberry boughs,
In barberry bells the gray moths sup,
Or where the choke-cherry lifts high up
Sweet bowls for their carouse.

Over the shelf of the sandy cove
Beach-peas blossom late.
By copse and cliff the swallows rove
Each calling to his mate.
Seaward the sea-gulls go,
And the land-birds all are here;
That green-gold flash was a vireo,
And yonder flame where the marsh-flags grow
Was a scarlet tanager.

This earth is not the steadfast place
We landsmen build upon;
From deep to deep she varies pace,
And while she comes is gone.
Beneath my feet I feel
Her smooth bulk heave and dip;
With velvet plunge and soft upreel
She swings and steadies to her keel
Like a gallant, gallant ship.

These summer clouds she sets for sail,
The sun is her masthead light,
She tows the moon like a pinnace frail
Where her phosphor wake churns bright.
Now hid, now looming clear,
On the face of the dangerous blue
The star fleets tack and wheel and veer,
But on, but on does the old earth steer
As if her port she knew.

God, dear God! Does she know her port,
Though she goes so far about?
Or blind astray, does she make her sport
To brazen and chance it out?
I watched when her captains passed:
She were better captainless.
Men in the cabin, before the mast,
But some were reckless and some aghast,
And some sat gorged at mess.

By her battened hatch I leaned and caught
Sounds from the noisome hold, —
Cursing and sighing of souls distraught
And cries too sad to be told.
Then I strove to go down and see;
But they said, "Thou art not of us!"
I turned to those on the deck with me
And cried, "Give help!" But they said, "Let be:
Our ship sails faster thus."

Jill-o'er-the-ground is purple blue,
Blue is the quaker-maid,
The alder-clump where the brook comes through
Breeds cresses in its shade.
To be out of the moiling street
With its swelter and its sin!
Who has given to me this sweet,

And given my brother dust to eat?
And when will his wage come in?

Scattering wide or blown in ranks,
Yellow and white and brown,
Boats and boats from the fishing banks
Come home to Gloucester town.
There is cash to purse and spend,
There are wives to be embraced,
Hearts to borrow and hearts to lend,
And hearts to take and keep to the end, —
O little sails, make haste!

But thou, vast outbound ship of souls,
What harbor town for thee?
What shapes, when thy arriving tolls,
Shall crowd the banks to see?
Shall all the happy shipmates then
Stand singing brotherly?
Or shall a haggard ruthless few
Warp her over and bring her to,
While the many broken souls of men
Fester down in the slaver's pen,
And nothing to say or do?

THE MENAGERIE

Thank God my brain is not inclined to cut
Such capers every day! I'm just about
Mellow, but then — There goes the tent-flap shut.
Rain's in the wind. I thought so: every snout
Was twitching when the keeper turned me out.

That screaming parrot makes my blood run cold.
Gabriel's trump! the big bull elephant
Squeals "Rain!" to the parched herd. The monkeys
scold.

And jabber that it's rain water they want.
(It makes me sick to see a monkey pant.)

I'll foot it home, to try and make believe
I'm sober. After this I stick to beer,
And drop the circus when the sane folks leave.
A man's a fool to look at things too near:
They look back, and begin to cut up queer.

Beasts do, at any rate; especially
Wild devils caged. They have the coolest way
Of being something else than what you see:
You pass a sleek young zebra nosing hay,
A nylghau looking bored and distingué, —

And think you've seen a donkey and a bird.
Not on your life! Just glance back, if you dare.
The zebra chews, the nylghau hasn't stirred;
But something's happened, Heaven knows what or
where,
To freeze your scalp and pompadour your hair.

I'm not precisely an æolian lute
Hung in the wandering winds of sentiment,
But drown me if the ugliest, meanest brute
Grunting and fretting in that sultry tent
Didn't just floor me with embarrassment!

'Twas like a thunder-clap from out the clear, —
One minute they were circus beasts, some grand,
Some ugly, some amusing, and some queer:
Rival attractions to the hobo band,
The flying jenny, and the peanut stand.

Next minute they were old hearth-mates of mine!
Lost people, eyeing me with such a stare!
Patient, satiric, devilish, divine;

A gaze of hopeless envy, squalid care,
Hatred, and thwarted love, and dim despair.

Within my blood my ancient kindred spoke, —
Grotesque and monstrous voices, heard afar
Down ocean caves when behemoth awoke,
Or through fern forests roared the plesiosaur
Locked with the giant-bat in ghastly war.

And suddenly, as in a flash of light,
I saw great Nature working out her plan;
Through all her shapes from mastodon to mite
Forever groping, testing, passing on
To find at last the shape and soul of Man.

Till in the fulness of accomplished time,
Comes brother Forepaugh, upon business bent,
Tracks her through frozen and through torrid clime,
And shows us, neatly labeled in a tent,
The stages of her huge experiment;

Blabbing aloud her shy and reticent hours;
Dragging to light her blinking, slothful moods;
Publishing fretful seasons when her powers
Worked wild and sullen in her solitudes,
Or when her mordant laughter shook the woods.

Here, round about me, were her vagrant births;
Sick dreams she had, fierce projects she essayed;
Her qualms, her fiery prides, her crazy mirths;
The troublings of her spirit as she strayed,
Cringed, gloated, mocked, was lordly, was afraid,

On that long road she went to seek mankind;
Here were the darkling coverts that she beat
To find the Hider she was sent to find;

Here the distracted footprints of her feet
Whereby her soul's Desire she came to greet.

But why should they, her botch-work, turn about
And stare disdain at me, her finished job?
Why was the place one vast suspended shout
Of laughter? Why did all the daylight throb
With soundless guffaw and dumb-stricken sob?

Helpless I stood among those awful cages;
The beasts were walking loose, and I was bagged!
I, I, last product of the toiling ages,
Goal of heroic feet that never lagged, —
A little man in trousers, slightly jagged.

Deliver me from such another jury!
The Judgment-day will be a picnic to't.
Their satire was more dreadful than their fury,
And worst of all was just a kind of brute
Disgust, and giving up, and sinking mute.

Survival of the fittest, adaptation,
And all their other evolution terms,
Seem to omit one small consideration,
To wit, that tumblebugs and angleworms
Have souls: there's soul in everything that squirms.

And souls are restless, plagued, impatient things,
All dream and unaccountable desire;
Crawling, but pestered with the thought of wings;
Spreading through every inch of earth's old mire
Mystical hanker after something higher.

Wishes *are* horses, as I understand.
I guess a wistful polyp that has strokes
Of feeling faint to gallivant on land

Will come to be a scandal to his folks;
Legs he will sprout, in spite of threats and jokes.

And at the core of every life that crawls
Or runs or flies or swims or vegetates —
Churning the mammoth's heart-blood, in the galls
Of shark and tiger planting gorgeous hates,
Lighting the love of eagles for their mates;

Yes, in the dim brain of the jellied fish
That is and is not living — moved and stirred
From the beginning a mysterious wish,
A vision, a command, a fatal Word:
The name of Man was uttered, and they heard.

Upward along the æons of old war
They sought him: wing and shank-bone, claw and bill
Were fashioned and rejected; wide and far
They roamed the twilight jungles of their will;
But still they sought him, and desired him still.

Man they desired, but mind you, Perfect Man,
The radiant and the loving, yet to be!
I hardly wonder, when they came to scan
The upshot of their strenuosity,
They gazed with mixed emotions upon *me*.

Well, my advice to you is, Face the creatures,
Or spot them sideways with your weather eye,
Just to keep tab on their expansive features;
It isn't pleasant when you're stepping high
To catch a giraffe smiling on the sly.

If nature made you graceful, don't get gay
Back-to before the hippopotamus;
If meek and godly, find some place to play

Besides right where three mad hyenas fuss:
You may hear language that we won't discuss.

If you're a sweet thing in a flower-bed hat,
Or her best fellow with your tie tucked in,
Don't squander love's bright springtime girding at
An old chimpanzee with an Irish chin:
There may be hidden meaning in his grin.

PANDORA'S SONG

Of wounds and sore defeat
I made my battle stay;
Winged sandals for my feet
I wove of my delay;
Of weariness and fear
I made my shouting spear;
Of loss, and doubt, and dread,
And swift oncoming doom
I made a helmet for my head
And a floating plume.
From the shutting mist of death,
From the failure of the breath,
I made a battle-horn to blow
Across the vales of overthrow.
O hearken, love, the battle-horn!
The triumph clear, the silver scorn!
O hearken where the echoes bring,
Down the gray disastrous morn,
Laughter and rallying!

GEORGE EDWARD WOODBERRY
(1855–)

Professor Woodberry has, more than any other living American poet, exerted a profound personal influence

upon the youth of his time in his teaching, now of the past, at Columbia University. His poetry is diffuse, mystical, some of it too loosely linked, too dependent upon mere eloquence. He deals sometimes with profound philosophical ideas with a lyrical impetus that carries them beyond the range of the average reader. But he may be said to be more truly Shelleyan in genuine, unforced lyricism than any other American poet one could name. He has written many volumes of poetry. His finest poems have distinct individuality. He has followed, with original force, in the great tradition of English song. His best volumes are *The Flight and Other Poems*, 1900; *Wild Eden*, 1914, and *The Roamer and Other Poems* (Harcourt), 1920. He has also edited editions of Poe and Shelley.

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

I RODE in the dark of the spirit
  A marvellous, marvellous way;
The faiths that the races inherit
  Behind in the sunset lay;
Dome, mosque, and temple huddled
  Bade farewell to the day;
But I rode into the leagues of the dark,
There was no light but my hoof-beats' spark
  That sprang from that marvellous way.

Behind were the coffined gods in their shroud
  Of jungle, desert, and mound,
The mighty man-bones and the mummies proud
  Stark in their caves underground;
And the planet that sepulchres god and man
  Bore me in the cone of its dark profound
To the ultimate clash in stellar space,
The way of the dead, god-making race
  Whirled with its dead gods round.

And my heart as the night grew colder
  Drew near to the heart of my steed;
I had pillowed my head on his shoulder
  Long years in the sand and the reed;
Long ago he was foaled of the Muses,
  And sired of the heroes' deed;
And he came unto me by the fountain
Of the old Hellenic mountain,
  And of heaven is his breed.

So my heart grew near to the heart of my horse
  Who was wiser, far wiser than I;
Yet wherever I leaned in my spirit's course,
  He swayed, and questioned not why;
And this was because he was born above,
  A child of the beautiful sky;
And now we were come to the kingdoms black,
And nevermore should we journey back
  To the land where the dead men lie.

Now whether or not in that grewsome air
  My soul was seized by the dread *cafard*,
Terror of deserts, I cannot swear;
  But I rode straight into an orbed star,
Where only reigned the spirit of good,
  And only the holy and virtuous are;
And my horse's eyes sent forth sun-rays,
And in my own was a noontide gaze
  That mastered that splendid star.

The madness of deserts, if so it be,
  Burned in my brain, and I saw
The multitudinous progeny
  Of the talon and the claw;
And Mammon in all their palaces
  Gaped with a golden maw;
And we rode far off from the glittering roofs,

And the horse, as he passed, with his heavenly hoofs
  Broke the tables of their law.

And we came to a city adjacent thereby,
  For the twain to one empire belong;
Black over it hung a terrible cry
  From eternal years of wrong;
And the land, it was full of gallows and prisons
  And the horrible deeds of the strong;
And we fled; but the flash of my horse's feet
Broke open the jails in every street,
  And lightnings burned there long.

We were past the good and the evil
  In the spirit's uttermost dark;
He is neither god nor devil
  For whom my heart-beats hark;
And I leaned my cheek to my horse's neck
  And I sang to his ear in the dark, —
"There is neither good nor evil,
There is neither god nor devil,
  And our way lies on through the dark.

"Once I saw by a throne
  A burning angel who cried, —
'I will suffer all woes that man's spirit has known,'
  And he plunged in the turbid tide;
And wherever he sank with that heart of love,
  He rose up purified;
Glowed brighter his limbs and his beautiful face,
And he went not back to the heavenly place,
  And he drew all men to his side.

"I have never heard it or learnt it,
  It is in me, like my soul,
And the sights of this world have burnt it
  In me to a living coal, —

The soul of man is a masterless thing
And bides not another's control;
And gypsy-broods of bandit-loins
Shall teach what the lawless life enjoins
Upon the lawless soul.

"When we dare neither to loose nor to bind,
Howsoever to us things appear;
When whatsoever in others we find,
We shall feel neither shame nor fear;
When we learn that to love the lowliest
We must first salute him our peer;
When the basest is most our brother,
And we neither look down on nor up to another, —
The end of our ride shall be near."

A wind arose from the dreadful past,
And the sand smoked on the knoll;
I saw, blown by the bolts of the blast,
The shreds of the Judgment Scroll;
I heard the death-spasms of Justice old
Under the seas and the mountains rolled;
Then the horse who had borne me through all disaster,
Turned blazing eyes upon me his master,
For the thoughts I sing are his soul.

And I sang in his ear, — "'Tis the old world dying
Whose death-cries through heaven are rolled;
Through the souls of men a flame is flying
That shall a new firmament mould;
And the uncreated light in man's spirit
Shall sun, moon and stars unfold;"
Then the horse snuffed the dark with his nostrils bright,
And he strode, and he stretched, and he neighed to the light
That shall beam at the word to be told.

O, STRUCK BENEATH THE LAUREL

O, STRUCK beneath the laurel, where the singing fountains are,
I saw from heaven falling the star of love afar;
O, slain in Eden's bower nigh the bourn where lovers rest,
I fell upon the arrow that was buried in my breast;

Farewell the noble labor, farewell the silent pain,
Farewell the perfect honor of the long years lived in vain;
I lie upon the moorland where the wood and pasture meet,
And the cords that no man breaketh are bound about my feet.

EDWIN MARKHAM (1852–)

EDWIN MARKHAM'S reputation was made by his *The Man with the Hoe*, a poem of social protest that antedated much so-called revolutionary American poetry that has succeeded it. Still, in the reading, it rings true metal. Later in life he wrote the poem on Lincoln here included which, in some ways, is superior to his more famous poem. His other work, of which a number of volumes have been published, is uneven. Often the influence of Swinburne is obvious. Markham has been a sturdy and vital figure in American letters and has spent himself in the encouragement of younger poets. Too often, perhaps, he has lent his art to public occasion. But he is one of our Western poets who will always be remembered. His picturesque presence at the meetings of the Poetry Society of America, but most of all his enduring idealism and interest in contemporary poetry and in a genuine democracy that is far more than a mere party slogan, have endeared him to a

generation. He is the most sincere and gifted "poet of the people" that we have had since Whitman. His early books were: *The Man with the Hoe and Other Poems* (1899), and *Lincoln and Other Poems* (1901); his later, *The Shoes of Happiness* (1914), and *The Gates of Paradise* (1920). His huge compilation in two volumes, *The Book of Poetry*, has recently been issued — a monumental anthology.

THE MAN WITH THE HOE

Written after seeing Millet's world-famous painting of a brutalized toiler in the deep abyss of labor.

God made man in his own image
in the image of God He made him.

Genesis.

Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world.
Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
To have dominion over sea and land;
To trace the stars and search the heavens for power;
To feel the passion of Eternity?
Is this the dream He dreamed who shaped the suns
And markt their ways upon the ancient deep?
Down all the caverns of Hell to their last gulf
There is no shape more terrible than this ——
More tongued with censure of the world's blind greed —

More filled with signs and portents for the soul —
More packt with danger to the universe.

What gulfs between him and the seraphim!
Slave of the wheel of labor, what to him
Are Plato and the swing of Pleiades?
What the long reaches of the peaks of song,
The rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose?
Thru this dread shape the suffering ages look;
Time's tragedy is in that aching stoop;
Thru this dread shape humanity betrayed,
Plundered, profaned and disinherited,
Cries protest to the Powers that made the world,
A protest that is also prophecy.

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
Is this the handiwork you give to God,
This monstrous thing distorted and soul-quencht?
How will you ever straighten up this shape;
Touch it again with immortality;
Give back the upward looking and the light;
Rebuild in it the music and the dream;
Make right the immemorial infamies,
Perfidious wrongs, immedicable woes?

O masters, lords and rulers in all lands,
How will the future reckon with this Man?
How answer his brute question in that hour
When whirlwinds of rebellion shake all shores?
How will it be with kingdoms and with kings —
With those who shaped him to the thing he is —
When this dumb Terror shall rise to judge the world,
After the silence of the centuries?

LINCOLN, THE MAN OF THE PEOPLE

When the Norn Mother saw the Whirlwind Hour
Greatening and darkening as it hurried on,
She left the Heaven of Heroes and came down
To make a man to meet the mortal need.
She took the tried clay of the common road —
Clay warm yet with the genial heat of Earth,
Dasht through it all a strain of prophecy,
Tempered the heap with thrill of human tears
Then mixt a laughter with the serious stuff.
Into the shape she breathed a flame to light
That tender, tragic, ever-changing face;
And laid on him a sense of the Mystic Powers,
Moving — all husht — behind the mortal vail.
Here was a man to hold against the world,
A man to match the mountains and the sea.

The color of the ground was in him, the red earth,
The smack and tang of elemental things:
The rectitude and patience of the cliff,
The good-will of the rain that loves all leaves,
The friendly welcome of the wayside well,
The courage of the bird that dares the sea,
The gladness of the wind that shakes the corn,
The pity of the snow that hides all scars,
The secrecy of streams that make their way
Under the mountain to the rifted rock,
The tolerance and equity of light
That gives as freely to the shrinking flower
As to the great oak flaring to the wind —
To the grave's low hill as to the Matterhorn
That shoulders out the sky. Sprung from the West,
He drank the valorous youth of a new world.
The strength of virgin forests braced his mind,
The hush of spacious prairies stilled his soul.
His words were oaks in acorns; and his thoughts
Were roots that firmly gript the granite truth.

Up from log cabin to the Capitol,
One fire was on his spirit, one resolve —
To send the keen ax to the root of wrong,
Clearing a free way for the feet of God,
The eyes of conscience testing every stroke,
To make his deed the measure of a man.
He built the rail-pile as he built the State,
Pouring his splendid strength through every blow:
The grip that swung the ax in Illinois
Was on the pen that set a people free.

So came the Captain with the mighty heart;
And when the judgment thunders split the house,
Wrenching the rafters from their ancient rest,
He held the ridgepole up, and spikt again
The rafters of the Home. He held his place —
Held the long purpose like a growing tree —
Held on through blame and faltered not at praise —
Towering in calm rough-hewn sublimity.
And when he fell in whirlwind, he went down
As when a lordly cedar, green with boughs,
Goes down with a great shout upon the hills,
And leaves a lonesome place against the sky.

GEORGE STERLING (1869–1926)

Brought up a Roman Catholic, Sterling, the most distinguished poet that California has produced (with the single exception of Robinson Jeffers) became completely agnostic and harked back to an ancient Paganism. He first came into prominence through the comment of his friend (and hero), the late Ambrose Bierce (writer of many remarkable *macabre* stories), upon Sterling's long poem *A Wine of Wizardry*, which is a mosaic of striking lines and phrases, strung together (it seems to us now) with too emphatic a forcing of effect. But Sterling (despite the mere sound and fury of much

of *The Testimony of the Suns*) developed steadily as an artist. He has produced some of the most extraordinary sonnets in American poetry. His best, in this form, can be compared without apology with the great sonnets of English verse. In his later phase he matured a genuine lyrical gift and mastered simplicity of utterance. Sterling lived life to the full and died charred by experience. Few men among men had firmer friends, for toward men he had a high quality of loyalty. He was a man in his younger days of magnificent physique, a man of the open, a strong swimmer, a lover of the sea. And there was also something faunlike about his nature. He was a thoroughly native Californian, and courageous in his sympathies. His work is distinctly traditional. But, though his temperamental generosity, his strange individuality, known and loved now of many, will be forgotten with time, there are certain of his poems so beautifully chiselled, wrought with such ardent mastery, that they are quite likely to endure. His *Selected Poems* was published by Holt in 1923.

THE QUEEN FORGETS

What came before and afterward
(She said) I do not know;
But I remember well a night
In a life long ago.

What spoil was I of Egypt sacked?
Of what old war the pledge?
Around my tent whose army lay,
At the great desert's edge?

A maiden, or a Satrap's wife,
A slave or queen was I
Who saw that night the steady stars
Go down the living sky?

And saw against the heavenly ranks
How one stood watch and ward.
Black on the stars he stood, and leaned
On a cross-hilted sword.

There was no sound in all the camp
But when a stallion neighed . . .
I saw the light of Sirius
On the cold blade.

Downward, above a single palm,
Slowly the great star crept;
More motionless my sentry stood,
As silently I wept.

What wrath had Libya for my loss?
In Syria what tears?
What king or swineherd cursed his god
In those forgotten years?

The tale is not in tapestry;
The grey monks do not know . . .
Only its shadow touches me
From out the long ago.

Of terror and of tenderness
Is that far vigil made,
And the green light of Sirius
On the chill blade.

THE BLACK VULTURE

Aloof within the day's enormous dome,
He holds unshared the silence of the sky.
Far down his bleak, relentless eyes descry
The eagle's empire and the falcon's home —
Far down, the galleons of sunset roam;

His hazards on the sea of morning lie;
Serene, he hears the broken tempest sigh
Where cold sierras gleam like scattered foam.

And least of all he holds the human swarm —
Unwitting now that envious men prepare
To make their dream and its fulfilment one,
When, poised above the caldrons of the storm,
Their hearts, contemptuous of death, shall dare
His roads between the thunder and the sun.

ALDEBARAN AT DUSK

Thou art the star for which all evening waits —
O star of peace, come tenderly and soon,
Nor heed the drowsy and enchanted moon,
Who dreams in silver at the eastern gates
Ere yet she brim with light the blue estates
Abandoned by the eagles of the noon.
But shine thou swiftly on the darkling dune
And woodlands where the twilight hesitates.

Above that wide and ruby lake to-West,
Wherein the sunset waits reluctantly,
Stir silently the purple wings of Night.
She stands afar, upholding to her breast,
As mighty murmurs reach her from the sea,
Thy lone and everlasting rose of light.

RIDGELY TORRENCE (1875–)

Mr. Torrence's first book, *The House of a Hundred Lights*, which bore the subtitle, "A Psalm of Experience after Reading a Couplet of Bidpai," appeared in 1900, at the turn of the century. It was succeeded in 1903 by *El Dorado, a Tragedy*. Four years later, he again essayed a play, *Abélard and Héloïse*, but in his group of three plays for a Negro theater, which was not published

until 1917, we find his highest dramatic achievement. A quarter of a century elapsed before his first book of poems was succeeded by his second, and latest, *Hesperides* (Macmillan), which contains his finest work.

Despite his comparatively slender contribution to American poetry, so far as mere bulk is concerned, Torrence is to-day properly recognized as one of our most truly gifted poets. It is quality, not quantity, that counts — and the quality of Torrence's latter work, as shown forth in *Hesperides*, is distinguished. He is an Ohioan by birth, was Librarian at the Astor and Lenox Libraries for a number of years, held various magazine positions, and is now poetry editor for *The New Republic*.

THE SON [1]

SOUTHERN OHIO MARKET TOWN

I HEARD an old farm-wife.
  Selling some barley,
Mingle her life with life
  And the name "Charley."

Saying: "The crop's all in,
  We're about through now;
Long nights will soon begin,
  We're just us two now.

"Twelve bushel at sixty cents,
  It's all I carried —
He sickened making fence;
  He was to be married —

"It feels like frost was near —
  His hair was curly.

[1] Ridgely Torrence, *Hesperides*. Copyright, 1925, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

The spring was late that year,
But the harvest early."

EYE-WITNESS[1]

Down by the railroad in a green valley
By dancing water, there he stayed awhile
Singing, and three men with him, listeners,
All tramps, all homeless reapers of the wind,
Motionless now and while the song went on
Transfigured into mages thronged with visions;
There with the late light of the sunset on them
And on clear water spinning from a spring
Through little cones of sand dancing and fading,
Close beside pine woods where a hermit thrush
Cast, when love dazzled him, shadows of music
That lengthened, fluting, through the singer's pauses
While the sure earth rolled eastward bringing stars
Over the singer and the men that listened
There by the roadside, understanding all.

A train went by but nothing seemed to be changed.
Some eye at a car window must have flashed
From the plush world inside the glassy Pullman,
Carelessly bearing off the scene forever,
With idle wonder what the men were doing,
Seeing they were so strangely fixed and seeing
Torn papers from their smeary dreary meal
Spread on the ground with old tomato cans
Muddy with dregs of lukewarm chicory,
Neglected while they listened to the song.
And while he sang the singer's face was lifted,
And the sky shook down a soft light upon him
Out of its branches where like fruits there were
Many beautiful stars and planets moving,

[1] Ridgely Torrence, *Hesperides*. Copyright, 1925, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

With lands upon them, rising from their seas,
Glorious lands with glittering sands upon them,
With soils of gold and magic mould for seeding,
The shining loam of lands afoam with gardens
On mightier stars with giant rains and suns
There in the heavens; but on none of all
Was there ground better than he stood upon:
There was no world there in the sky above him
Deeper in promise than the earth beneath him
Whose dust had flowered up in him the singer
And three men understanding every word.

The Tramp sings:

I will sing, I will go, and never ask me "Why?"
I was born a rover and a passer-by.

I seem to myself like water and sky,
A river and a rover and a passer-by.

But in the winter three years back
We lit us a night fire by the track,

And the snow came up and the fire it flew
And we couldn't find the warming room for two.

One had to suffer, so I left him the fire
And I went to the weather from my heart's desire.

It was night on the line, it was no more fire
But the zero whistle through the icy wire.

As I went suffering through the snow
Something like a shadow came moving slow.

I went up to it and I said a word;
Something flew above it like a kind of bird.

I leaned in closer and I saw a face;
A light went round me but I kept my place.

My heart went open like an apple sliced;
I saw my Saviour and I saw my Christ.

Well, you may not read it in a book,
But it takes a gentle Saviour to give a gentle look.

I looked in his eyes and I read the news;
His heart was having the railroad blues.

Oh, the railroad blues will cost you dear,
Keeps you moving on for something that you don't see here.

We stood and whispered in a kind of moon;
The line was looking like May and June.

I found he was a roamer and a journey man
Looking for a lodging since the night began.

He went to the doors but he didn't have the pay.
He went to the windows, then he went away.

Says, "We'll walk together, and we'll both be fed."
Says, "I will give you the 'other' bread."

Oh, the bread he gave and without money!
O drink, O fire, O burning honey!

It went all through me like a shining storm:
I saw inside me, it was light and warm.

I saw deep under and I saw above,
I saw the stars weighed down with love.

They sang that love to burning birth,
They poured that music to the earth.

I heard the stars sing low like mothers.
He said: "Now look, and help feed others."

I looked around, and as close as touch
Was everybody that suffered much.

They reached out, there was darkness only;
They could not see us, they were lonely.

I saw the hearts that deaths took hold of,
With the wounds bare that were not told of;

Hearts with things in them making gashes;
Hearts that were choked with their dreams' ashes;

Women in front of the rolled-back air,
Looking at their breasts and nothing there;

Good men wasting and trapped in hells;
Hurt lads shivering with the fare-thee-wells.

I saw them as if something bound them;
I stood there but my heart went round them.

I begged him not to let me see them wasted.
Says, "Tell them then what you have tasted."

Told him I was weak as a rained-on bee;
Told him I was lost. — Says: "Lean on me."

Something happened then I could not tell,
But I knew I had the water for every hell.

Any other thing it was no use bringing;
They needed what the stars were singing,

What the whole sky sang like waves of light,
The tune that it danced to, day and night.

Oh, I listened to the sky for the tune to come;
The song seemed easy, but I stood there dumb.

The stars could feel me reaching through them
They let down light and drew me to them.

I stood in the sky in a light like day,
Drinking in the word that all things say

Where the worlds hang growing in clustered shapes
Dripping the music like wine from grapes.

With "Love, Love, Love," above the pain,
— The vine-like song with its wine-like rain.

Through heaven under heaven the song takes root
Of the turning, burning, deathless fruit.

I came to the earth and the pain so near me,
I tried that song but they couldn't hear me.

I went down into the ground to grow,
A seed for a song that would make men know.

Into the ground from my roamer's light
I went; he watched me sink to night.

Deep in the ground from my human grieving,
His pain ploughed in me to believing.

Oh, he took earth's pain to be his bride,
While the heart of life sang in his side.

For I felt that pain, I took its kiss,
My heart broke into dust with his.

Then sudden through the earth I found life springing;
The dust men trampled on was singing.

Deep in my dust I felt its tones;
The roots of beauty went round my bones.

I stirred, I rose like a flame, like a river,
I stood on the line, I could sing forever.

Love had pierced into my human sheathing,
Song came out of me simple as breathing.

A freight came by, the line grew colder,
He laid his hand upon my shoulder.

Says, "Don't stay on the line such nights,"
And led me by the hand to the station lights.

I asked him in front of the station-house wall
If he had lodging. Says, "None at all."

I pointed to my heart and looked in his face, —
"Here, — if you haven't got a better place."

He looked and he said: "Oh, we still must roam
But if you'll keep it open, well, I'll call it 'home.'"

The thrush now slept whose pillow was his wing.
So the song ended and the four remained
Still in the faint starshine that silvered them,
While the low sound went on of broken water
Out of the spring and through the darkness flowing
Over a stone that held it from the sea.
Whether the men spoke after could not be told,

A mist from the ground so veiled them, but they waited
A little longer till the moon came up;
Then on the gilded track leading to the mountains,
Against the moon they faded in common gold
And earth bore East with all toward the new morning.

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY (1861–1920)

For the last nineteen years of her life Miss Guiney lived in England. She died at Chipping-Camden, near Oxford. She was born, however, a New-Englander and a Roman Catholic. "There is fiber in all she writes," Miss Rittenhouse noted once. And she spoke appositely of the crispness of her utterance. Miss Guiney's spiritual poetry is gallant and firm-sinewed. Her faith cried out for "a short life in the saddle, Lord!" Besides poetry, she also wrote peculiarly pungent essays. She was one of the true appreciators of the flavor of great writers of the past. The Cavalier poets were a particular admiration of hers. She was also the editor of selections from Mangan and Matthew Arnold, of Dr. Parsons's translation of the *Divine Comedy*, and of Henry Vaughn's *Mount of Olives*, among much other work. Her latter years were given much to research in the literary domains that chiefly interested her. E. M. Tenison has written an excellent life of this spirited American poet, and Alice Brown has given us a beautiful monograph upon her. Although her very earliest work appeared back in the eighties, and perhaps her best volume of poems, *A Roadside Harp*, as early as 1893, her final choice from her own poems, after her own inevitable critical sifting, did not come until 1909. The volume has recently been reprinted by Houghton Mifflin Company and is entitled *Happy Ending*. Though cloistered from our modern day by her own predilections, she still speaks to it with clear utterance, and ringingly for the things of the spirit.

THE KINGS

A MAN said unto his Angel:
"My spirits are fallen low,
And I cannot carry this battle:
O brother! where might I go?

"The terrible Kings are on me
With spears that are deadly bright;
Against me so from the cradle
Do fate and my fathers fight."

Then said to the man his Angel:
"Thou wavering, witless soul,
Back to the ranks! What matter
To win or lose the whole,

"As judged by the little judges
Who hearken not well, nor see?
Not thus, by the outer issue,
The Wise shall interpret thee.

"Thy will is the sovereign measure
And only event of things:
The puniest heart, defying,
Were stronger than all these Kings.

"Though out of the past they gather,
Mind's Doubt, and Bodily Pain,
And pallid Thirst of the Spirit
That is kin to the other twain.

"And Grief, in a cloud of banners,
And ringleted Vain Desires,
And Vice, with the spoils upon him
Of thee and thy beaten sires, —

"While Kings of eternal evil
  Yet darken the hills about,
Thy part is with broken sabre
  To rise on the last redoubt;

"To fear not sensible failure,
  Nor covet the game at all,
But fighting, fighting, fighting,
  Die, driven against the wall!"

A FRIEND'S SONG FOR SIMOISIUS

The breath of dew, and twilight's grace,
Be on the lonely battle-place;
And to so young, so kind a face,
The long, protecting grasses cling!
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

In rocky hollows cool and deep,
The bees our boyhood hunted sleep;
The early moon from Ida's steep
Comes to the empty wrestling-ring.
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

Upon the widowed wind recede
No echoes of the shepherd's reed,
And children without laughter lead
The war-horse to the watering.
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

Thou stranger Ajax Telamon!
What to the loveliest hast thou done,
That ne'er with him a maid may run

Across the marigolds in spring?
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

With footstep separate and slow
The father and the mother go,
Not now upon an urn they know
To mingle tears for comforting.
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

The world to me has nothing dear
Beyond the namesake river here:
O Simois is wild and clear!
And to his brink my heart I bring;
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

My heart no more, if that might be,
Would stay his waters from the sea,
To cover Troy, to cover me,
To save us from the perishing.
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE (1856–)

Miss Reese was born in Maryland and taught high-school English in Baltimore for years. Seven years ago she retired, though she still lives in that city. Her shyly and beautifully lyrical little volumes began to appear as early as 1891. She is the poet of the sequestered garden, and yet her sonnet, "Tears," has become one of the most famous in American poetry. She has lived simply and quietly, but her keen observation of simple, natural things and of the countryside she knows so intimately has now become the delightful inheritance

of a generation. This is because she has been able to express her nice observation in words that exactly convey its significance to her mood, and because, quiet and unobtrusive as are many of her lines, she is able to pack them with restrained but deep feeling.

Recently her *Selected Poems* have been issued through Doubleday, Doran and Company, and more recently still she has published a short narrative poem, *Little Henrietta*. She is a Southern poet who has etched for us, delicately and indelibly, the pastoral scene of a certain unspoiled corner of our country.

TEARS

When I consider Life and its few years —
A wisp of fog betwixt us and the sun;
A call to battle, and the battle done
Ere the last echo dies within our ears;
A rose choked in the grass; an hour of fears;
The gusts that past a darkening shore do beat;
The burst of music down an unlistening street —
I wonder at the idleness of tears.
Ye old, old dead, and ye of yesternight,
Chieftains, and bards, and keepers of the sheep,
By every cup of sorrow that you had,
Loose me from tears, and make me see aright
How each hath back what once he stayed to weep;
Homer his sight, David his little lad!

IN TIME OF GRIEF

Dark, thinned, beside the wall of stone,
The box dripped in the air;
Its odor through my house was blown
Into the chamber there.

Remote and yet distinct the scent,
The sole thing of the kind,

As though one spoke a word half meant
That left a sting behind.

I knew not Grief would go from me,
And naught of it be plain,
Except how keen the box can be
After a fall of rain.

ANNA HEMPSTEAD BRANCH (188—)

One of the remarkable mystical poems of our time is Anna Hempstead Branch's *The Monk in the Kitchen*, but it appears to us that too little attention has heretofore been paid to her blank verse narrative, *Nimrod*. This is one of the most vigorous and astonishingly sustained poems ever written by a woman in America, and it should rank as one of the great poems written by any woman in English. The imaginative conception, the power and sonority of the language, the burning fervor of many of its passages are, if men do not too much flatter themselves, what has been called "masculine" in energy. When she turns to more lyrical utterance, Miss Branch, as more often in her earlier days, is apt to write at too great length; yet, despite its almost interminable spate, and its debt to Coleridge, *The Wedding Feast*, for instance, ever amazes one anew with the nature of its trance.

In Anna Hempstead Branch we have the genuinely dedicated mystic. She has given her life over to East Side settlement work in New York and has, for years, proved an inspiration to younger people essaying the arts, through her chosen leadership at Christodora House in that city. Her temper is religious in the deepest sense, her dependence upon "inspiration" of a Blakeian kind. To meet her is to meet one who seems to have learned the secret of a profound inner happiness. Of late years we have had too little of her work. Her

two best volumes were published in 1905 and in 1910. They are *The Shoes that Danced* and *Rose of the Wind* (Houghton Mifflin Company).

NIMROD WARS WITH THE ANGELS

But God sent forth a pale and spectral host
Of war horse and of rider. From the steeps
And citadels of cloud on the horizon,
They mightily plunged upon the embattled plain
Encircled round great Babel. Blazing scouts
Skirmished the valley; shadowy stallions reared,
Driven by vast archangels, whose fierce spears
Whirling aloft, they stabbed upon the town.
A thousand gusty shapes rushed forth to war.
And there were chariots of dust that drove
Windily down the plain. Bright meteors lit
Upon them screaming. Built among the clouds
Were domes and turrets; and blazing with pale lights
Acropolis towered above acropolis.
Then Nimrod, throned upon his peak, looked down
To where the blazing cohorts of the Lord
Threatened the town with vengeance; and he rose,
Obscured with wrath as is the sun with cloud.
And like an engine of dread war he set
His shoulder to the mountain side and heaved
Its giant bowlders forth till from the cliff
With sudden scream, as if some savage chief
Would drive his angry cohorts into war,
They leaped with sound of grating wheels and plunged
Down the precipitous slope at God's encampment.
But Nimrod, leaping to the mightiest stone,
Then bounding to another as they plunged,
With arms outstretched and darkly beetling breast,
With angry locks, with great and god-like eye,
With furious shouts of battle and laughter huge,
And challenges to Heaven, scourged with cries

His screaming stallions maned with whistling wind,
Goaded the vengeance of His flinty wheels
That bright with many a whirling fire appeared
Bestrid with eyes — yes — like the lightning perched
Upon the gale, he swept upon God's hosts
His monstrous cavalcades. Then, driving down
His thousand thundering chariots of stone,
Enraged, enraptured, pale, with bow upraised,
Great Nimrod shot his arrow at the gods.
And lo, the heavenly onslaught flamed away.
God's dark encampment lifted from the plain.
Then there were rushings heard in the deep air
And all the spectral host paled from the sky.

Then Nimrod unto Babel cried aloud.
"Lo, I have shot in Heaven God's great white horse!
With neighings and fearful tramplings he went down!
And his affrighted angel drifts pale wings
Across his bosom, lest he take from me
The anguish of mine arrow in mid air.
Am I not Nimrod?" And he cried aloud,
"Am I not Nimrod?"

BABEL FALLS

"Oh, thou great Babel — out of nothing reared —
Shake! Crumble utterly! Be thou dismayed!
For God is wroth upon you and to Him
Thy citadel is as a voice at night —
Thy brazen bastions built of empty wind.
Thou art abolished fearfully. His feet
Are darkly spread among you. Ye shall go
Afflicted and confounded. Ye shall rage
In scattered tribes. God's strong and awful wars
He will send down upon you. And no man
Shall to his brother lift a cry of peace.
Words shall be taken from you. On your lips

Your utterance shall be confused. Your breath
Shall sicken in your nostrils and send forth
A stench upon this land. With wailing voices
Ye shall breed forth new words and every one
Like old death-bearing Cain shall breathe out death.
Your tribe henceforth shall speak a various tongue
And there shall be a curse upon your speech."

Then from that stellar orb that is the earth,
Rose such a lamentation that it vexed
The listening brightness of the zodiac.
And many a star fell from the sky that night
With mortal grief afflicted. Meteor-eyed,
Eternity watched a new epoch dawn
Upon that furious planet set in time.
Then in high heaven all the angelic host,
Beating about God's ramparts like a tide,
Swelled terrible with glory, and the eyes
Of no Archangel could range forth so far
As to declare the end of that vast sea.
But bright with billowy radiance they heaved
Their rugged splendor underneath the sun
And surged against the battlements. For, lo!
There shot among them fires that were such thoughts
As never more should blaze upon the earth,
Whose terrible radiance was the garb of speech.
Breathed in by Heaven, swept back God's beauteous words
To the eternal peace from which they came.
Burning, they plunged into the Angel's hands.
They sunk their glowing shapes into his brain.
They shouted in his thighs, and in his feet
Raised pæans of delight until he leaped
Before the Lord with prophecy enraged.
They foamed upon his brow. They swam serene
Through the translucent whiteness of his breast.
Amid his spiritual substance, fires shone

With moving splendor and interior flame.
They made soft music in his throbbing plumes
And on his finger tips did sweetly sing.
But never more on earth those orbs of light
Choired truth along the orbits of man's brain.
And with them rushed swart algebras, disturbed
From their deep lairs of stone; and numbers swept
Their wings from earth until material things
Groaned, crumbled, were no more. Swift accuracies,
Smooth-limbed and beautiful with flying feet,
Fled from their bright abodes of tower and wall
And, poised in high air, looked down amazed
To see huge towers stricken by their flight;
Lines, whirled about the heavenly ramparts, swung
From ancient straightness into anguished shapes
They had not dreamed of, arcs, and angles strange,
And terrible spirals. Many a tortured curve,
Unwoven from arch and dome, was stretched in pangs
Of pained and frigid straightness. High in air
Moved mournful, calm and stern geometries —
Pale priests of space — that from their ancient hands
Loosed the old order and, at God's altars bowed,
Laid down their sacrifice of beauty. Then
A murmur rose among the radiant ones,
And they grew turbulent in Heaven, for lo,
The angel had gone down. His terrible wings,
That with bright comets bristled as with eyes,
Did shake the atmosphere like living wars.
Blown through his hair were strong bright meteors
Consuming as with flame. His thundering feet
Ploughed up the earth till fearfully she rocked
And groaned as chaos did of old. His eyes
Blazed like volcanoes from pale peaks of air
And prophesied destruction. His screaming voice
Perched like an eagle on white cliffs of the sky
And snatched earth's vision Heavenward. His brow
Passed judgment on the universe. His robes

With conflagration burned the gale. Oh then
There was a cry in Heaven, for all the host
Of bright magnificence, with thundering voice,
Shouted abroad in Heaven, "Great Babel Falls."

PART II

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON
(1869–)

To many Edwin Arlington Robinson is the most important of all modern American poets, though an equal number might rather choose Robert Frost. Mr. Robinson's recent *Tristram*, owing to the imprimatur given it by The Literary Guild of America, attained probably the largest immediate sale that any book of poetry, save perhaps *The Spoon River Anthology* and *John Brown's Body*, has ever had in the United States. It is regarded by many as Robinson's crowning achievement in narrative verse. However this may be, the bulk of his poems (now collected in a large volume by The Macmillan Company), the indelible mark of originality that is upon all his work, entitle him to high, perhaps the highest, contemporary rank.

He was born at Head Tide, Maine. He entered Harvard in 1891 and left in 1893. His first small book, *The Torrent and the Night Before*, was privately printed in 1896. A year later came *The Children of the Night*. Then five years elapsed during which the poet struggled at bread-winning in New York City. In 1902 he published *Captain Craig*, and soon after, through President Roosevelt, gained a position in the New York Custom House, which he held for five years. Eight years after *Captain Craig* came *The Town Down the River*. This was in 1910. Succeeding volumes have included *The Man Against the Sky* (1916), *Merlin* (1917), *The Three Taverns* and *Lancelot* (1920), and later *Avon's Harvest*, *Roman Bartholow*, *The Man Who Died Twice*, *Dionysus in Doubt*, *Tristram*, and *Cavender's House*.

Robinson excels at human portraiture and in psychological analysis. His idiom is strictly his own. He has also given a new, intensely individual treatment to the Arthurian legends. He can pack the gist of long narrative, with many implications, into a sonnet. He is a wizard craftsman and a technician unsparing in self-criticism. Three times he has won the Pulitzer Prize for poetry.

THE MASTER[1]

(Lincoln)

A FLYING word from here and there
Had sown the name at which we sneered,
But soon the name was everywhere,
To be reviled and then revered:
A presence to be loved and feared,
We cannot hide it, or deny
That we, the gentlemen who jeered,
May be forgotten by and by.

He came when days were perilous
And hearts of men were sore beguiled;
And having made his note of us,
He pondered and was reconciled.
Was ever master yet so mild
As he, and so untamable?
We doubted, even when he smiled,
Not knowing what he knew so well.

He knew that undeceiving fate
Would shame us whom he served unsought;
He knew that he must wince and wait —
The jest of those for whom he fought;
He knew devoutly what he thought
Of us and of our ridicule;

[1] Supposed to have been written not long after the Civil War.

He knew that we must all be taught
Like little children in a school.

We gave a glamour to the task
That he encountered and saw through,
But little of us did he ask,
And little did we ever do.
And what appears if we review
The season when we railed and chaffed?
It is the face of one who knew
That we were learning while we laughed.

The face that in our vision feels
Again the venom that we flung,
Transfigured to the world reveals
The vigilance to which we clung.
Shrewd, hallowed, harassed, and among
The mysteries that are untold,
The face we see was never young
Nor could it wholly have been old.

For he, to whom we had applied
Our shopman's test of age and worth,
Was elemental when he died,
As he was ancient at his birth:
The saddest among kings of earth,
Bowed with a galling crown, this man
Met rancor with a cryptic mirth,
Laconic — and Olympian.

The love, the grandeur, and the fame
Are bounded by the world alone;
The calm, the smouldering, and the flame
Of awful patience were his own:
With him they are forever flown
Past all our fond self-shadowings,
Wherewith we cumber the Unknown
As with inept, Icarian wings.

For we were not as other men:
'Twas ours to soar and his to see;
But we are coming down again,
And we shall come down pleasantly;
Nor shall we longer disagree
On what it is to be sublime,
But flourish in our perigee
And have one Titan at a time.

RICHARD CORY

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
We people on the pavement looked at him:
He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
Clean favored, and imperially slim.

And he was always quietly arrayed,
And he was always human when he talked;
But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
"Good-morning," and he glittered when he walked.

And he was rich — yes, richer than a king,
And admirably schooled in every grace:
In fine, we thought that he was everything
To make us wish that we were in his place.

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
And went without the meat, and cursed the bread;
And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
Went home and put a bullet through his head.

THE GIFT OF GOD [1]

Blessed with a joy that only she
Of all alive shall ever know,

[1] From Edwin Arlington Robinson, *The Man Against the Sky*. Copyright, 1916, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

She wears a proud humility
For what it was that willed it so, —
That her degree should be so great
Among the favored of the Lord
That she may scarcely bear the weight
Of her bewildering reward.

As one apart, immune, alone,
Or featured for the shining ones,
And like to none that she has known
Of other women's other sons, —
The firm fruition of her need,
He shines anointed; and he blurs
Her vision, till it seems indeed
A sacrilege to call him hers.

She fears a little for so much
Of what is best, and hardly dares
To think of him as one to touch
With aches, indignities, and cares;
She sees him rather at the goal,
Still shining; and her dream foretells
The proper shining of a soul
Where nothing ordinary dwells.

Perchance a canvass of the town
Would find him far from flags and shouts,
And leave him only the renown
Of many smiles and many doubts;
Perchance the crude and common tongue
Would havoc strangely with his worth;
But she, with innocence unwrung,
Would read his name around the earth.

And others, knowing how this youth
Would shine, if love could make him great,
When caught and tortured for the truth

Would only writhe and hesitate;
While she, arranging for his days
What centuries could not fulfill,
Transmutes him with her faith and praise,
And has him shining where she will.

She crowns him with her gratefulness,
And says again that life is good;
And should the gift of God be less
In him than in her motherhood,
His fame, though vague, will not be small,
As upward through her dream he fares,
Half clouded with a crimson fall
Of roses thrown on marble stairs.

FOR A DEAD LADY

No more with overflowing light
Shall fill the eyes that now are faded,
Nor shall another's fringe with night
Their woman-hidden world as they did.
No more shall quiver down the days
The flowing wonder of her ways,
Whereof no language may requite
The shifting and the many-shaded.

The grace, divine, definitive,
Clings only as a faint forestalling;
The laugh that love could not forgive
Is hushed, and answers to no calling;
The forehead and the little ears
Have gone where Saturn keeps the years;
The breast where roses could not live
Has done with rising and with falling.

The beauty, shattered by the laws
That have creation in their keeping,

No longer trembles at applause,
Or over children that are sleeping;
And we who delve in beauty's lore
Know all that we have known before
Of what inexorable cause
Makes Time so vicious in his reaping.

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW[1]

THERE were faces to remember in the Valley of the Shadow,
There were faces unregarded, there were faces to forget;
There were fires of grief and fear that are a few forgotten ashes,
There were sparks of recognition that are not forgotten yet.
For at first, with an amazed and overwhelming indignation
At a measureless malfeasance that obscurely willed it thus,
They were lost and unacquainted — till they found themselves in others,
Who had groped as they were groping where dim ways were perilous.

There were lives that were as dark as are the fears and intuitions
Of a child who knows himself and is alone with what he knows;
There were pensioners of dreams and there were debtors of illusions,
All to fail before the triumph of a weed that only grows.

[1] From Edwin Arlington Robinson, *The Three Taverns*. Copyright, 1920, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

There were thirsting heirs of golden sieves that held not
wine or water,
And had no names in traffic or more value there than
toys:
There were blighted sons of wonder in the Valley of the
Shadow,
Where they suffered and still wondered why their
wonder made no noise.

There were slaves who dragged the shackles of a prece-
dent unbroken,
Demonstrating the fulfilment of unalterable schemes,
Which had been, before the cradle, Time's inexorable
tenants
Of what were now the dusty ruins of their father's
dreams.
There were these, and there were many who had stum-
bled up to manhood,
Where they saw too late the road they should have
taken long ago:
There were thwarted clerks and fiddlers in the Valley of
the Shadow,
The commemorative wreckage of what others did not
know.

And there were daughters older than the mothers who
had borne them,
Being older in their wisdom, which is older than the
earth;
And they were going forward only farther into dark-
ness,
Unrelieved as were the blasting obligations of their
birth;
And among them, giving always what was not for their
possession,
There were maidens, very quiet, with no quiet in their
eyes;

There were daughters of the silence in the Valley of the Shadow,
Each an isolated item in the family sacrifice.

There were creepers among catacombs where dull regrets were torches,
Giving light enough to show them what was there upon the shelves —
Where there was more for them to see than pleasure would remember
Of something that had been alive and once had been themselves.
There were some who stirred the ruins with a solid imprecation,
While as many fled repentance for the promise of despair:
There were drinkers of wrong waters in the Valley of the Shadow,
And all the sparkling ways were dust that once had led them there.

There were some who knew the steps of Age incredibly beside them,
And his fingers upon shoulders that had never felt the wheel;
And their last of empty trophies was a gilded cup of nothing,
Which a contemplating vagabond would not have come to steal.
Long and often had they figured for a larger valuation,
But the size of their addition was the balance of a doubt:
There were gentlemen of leisure in the Valley of the Shadow,
Not allured by retrospection, disenchanted, and played out.

And among the dark endurances of unavowed reprisals
There were silent eyes of envy that saw little but saw well;
And over beauty's aftermath of hazardous ambitions
There were tears for what had vanished as they vanished where they fell.
Not assured of what was theirs, and always hungry for the nameless,
There were some whose only passion was for Time who made them cold:
There were numerous fair women in the Valley of the Shadow,
Dreaming rather less of heaven than of hell when they were old.

Now and then, as if to scorn the common touch of common sorrow,
There were some who gave a few the distant pity of a smile;
And another cloaked a soul as with an ash of human embers,
Having covered thus a treasure that would last him for a while.
There were many by the presence of the many disaffected,
Whose exemption was included in the weight that others bore:
There were seekers after darkness in the Valley of the Shadow,
And they alone were there to find what they were looking for.

So they were, and so they are; and as they came are coming others,
And among them are the fearless and the meek and the unborn;

And a question that has held us heretofore without an answer
May abide without an answer until all have ceased to mourn.
For the children of the dark are more to name than are the wretched,
Or the broken, or the weary, or the baffled, or the shamed:
There are builders of new mansions in the Valley of the Shadow,
And among them are the dying and the blinded and the maimed.

ROBERT FROST (1875–)

One of the most distinguished poets in our generation, some would undoubtedly give to Robert Frost the title of America's leading writer of verse. Though born in San Francisco he came back at an early age to the New England of his forbears. He entered Dartmouth College, at Hanover, New Hampshire, but remained there less than a year. Later, after he was married, he entered Harvard and stuck to it for two years. But in neither instance could he find his greatest growth in following a curriculum. For eleven years he farmed at Derry, New Hampshire, and then, in 1912, sold his farm and took his wife and four children to England. It was not long after that that his first volume, *A Boy's Will*, was published. A year later, while living in Gloucestershire, *North of Boston* appeared. In 1915 he returned to America.

He returned to find himself well known for *North of Boston*, and his reputation has been increased through every subsequent volume he has published, *Mountain Interval*, *New Hampshire* (which won him the Pulitzer Prize in 1923), *Selected Poems* (Henry Holt & Co.), and

West-Running Brook. To-day he holds an "idle professorship" both at Amherst and at the University of Michigan. He lectures a little and spends much time on his Vermont farm.

Robert Frost is thoroughly and deeply a poet of *locale*. He — almost it might be said — *is* New England. His poems have shown us every phase of it — its landscapes, its people. He has developed an extremely distinctive style of his own. It is a quiet, unstressed style, but one that, when you grow familiar with it, renders with strongly original accent the profoundest meanings. He is a fine lyrist and his stories in verse express New England folk and New England ways as they have never been expressed before.

THE DEATH OF THE HIRED MAN

MARY sat musing on the lamp-flame at the table
Waiting for Warren. When she heard his step,
She ran on tip-toe down the darkened passage
To meet him in the doorway with the news
And put him on his guard. "Silas is back."
She pushed him outward with her through the door
And shut it after her. "Be kind," she said.
She took the market things from Warren's arms
And set them on the porch, then drew him down
To sit beside her on the wooden steps.

"When was I ever anything but kind to him?
But I'll not have the fellow back," he said.
"I told him so last haying, didn't I?
'If he left then,' I said, 'that ended it.'
What good is he? Who else will harbour him
At his age for the little he can do?
What help he is there's no depending on.
Off he goes always when I need him most.
'He thinks he ought to earn a little pay,

Enough at least to buy tobacco with,
So he won't have to beg and be beholden.'
'All right,' I say, 'I can't afford to pay
Any fixed wages, though I wish I could.'
'Some one else can.' 'Then some one else will have to.'
I shouldn't mind his bettering himself
If that was what it was. You can be certain,
When he begins like that, there's some one at him
Trying to coax him off with pocket-money, —
In haying time, when any help is scarce.
In winter he comes back to us. I'm done."

"Sh! not so loud: he'll hear you," Mary said.

"I want him to: he'll have to soon or late."

"He's worn out. He's asleep beside the stove.
When I came up from Rowe's I found him here,
Huddled against the barn-door fast asleep,
A miserable sight, and frightening, too —
You needn't smile — I didn't recognize him —
I wasn't looking for him — and he's changed.
Wait till you see."

"Where did you say he'd been?"

"He didn't say. I dragged him to the house,
And gave him tea and tried to make him smoke.
I tried to make him talk about his travels.
Nothing would do: he just kept nodding off."

"What did he say? Did he say anything?"

"But little."

"Anything? Mary, confess
He said he'd come to ditch the meadow for me."

"Warren!"
"But did he? I just want to know."

"Of course he did. What would you have him say?
Surely you wouldn't grudge the poor old man
Some humble way to save his self-respect.
He added, if you really care to know,
He meant to clear the upper pasture, too.
That sounds like something you have heard before?
Warren, I wish you could have heard the way
He jumbled everything. I stopped to look
Two or three times — he made me feel so queer —
To see if he was talking in his sleep.
He ran on Harold Wilson — you remember —
The boy you had in haying four years since,
He's finished school, and teaching in his college.
Silas declares you'll have to get him back.
He says they two will make a team for work:
Between them they will lay this farm as smooth!
The way he mixed that in with other things.
He thinks young Wilson a likely lad, though daft
On education — you know how they fought
All through July under the blazing sun,
Silas up on the cart to build the load,
Harold along beside to pitch it on."

"Yes, I took care to keep well out of earshot."

"Well, those days trouble Silas like a dream.
You wouldn't think they would. How some things linger!
Harold's young college boy's assurance piqued him.
After so many years he still keeps finding
Good arguments he sees he might have used.
I sympathise. I know just how it feels
To think of the right thing to say too late.
Harold's associated in his mind with Latin.

He asked me what I thought of Harold's saying
He studied Latin like the violin
Because he liked it — that an argument!
He said he couldn't make the boy believe
He could find water with a hazel prong —
Which showed how much good school had ever done him.
He wanted to go over that. But most of all
He thinks if he could have another chance
To teach him how to build a load of hay ——"

"I know, that's Silas' one accomplishment.
He bundles every forkful in its place,
And tags and numbers it for future reference,
So he can find and easily dislodge it
In the unloading. Silas does that well.
He takes it out in bunches like big birds' nests.
You never see him standing on the hay
He's trying to lift, straining to lift himself."

"He thinks if he could teach him that, he'd be
Some good perhaps to someone in the world.
He hates to see a boy the fool of books.
Poor Silas, so concerned for other folk,
And nothing to look backward to with pride,
And nothing to look forward to with hope,
So now and never any different."

Part of a moon was falling down the west,
Dragging the whole sky with it to the hills.
Its light poured softly in her lap. She saw
And spread her apron to it. She put her hand
Among the harp-like morning-glory strings,
Taut with the dew from garden bed to eaves,
As if she played unheard the tenderness
That wrought on him beside her in the night.
"Warren," she said, "he has come home to die:
You needn't be afraid he'll leave you this time."

"Home," he mocked gently.

"Yes, what else but home?
It all depends on what you mean by home.
Of course he's nothing to us, any more
Than was the hound that came a stranger to us
Out of the woods, worn out upon the trail."

"Home is the place where, when you have to go there
They have to take you in."
"I should have called it
Something you somehow haven't to deserve."

Warren leaned out and took a step or two,
Picked up a little stick, and brought it back
And broke it in his hand and tossed it by.
"Silas has better claim on us you think
Than on his brother? Thirteen little miles
As the road winds would bring him to his door.
Silas has walked that far no doubt to-day.
Why didn't he go there? His brother's rich,
A somebody — director in the bank."

"He never told us that."

"We know it though."

"I think his brother ought to help, of course.
I'll see to that if there is need. He ought of right
To take him in, and might be willing to —
He may be better than appearances.
But have some pity on Silas. Do you think
If he'd had any pride in claiming kin
Or anything he looked for from his brother,
He'd keep so still about him all this time?"

"I wonder what's between them."

"I can tell you.
Silas is what he is — we wouldn't mind him —
But just the kind that kinsfolk can't abide.
He never did a thing so very bad.
He don't know why he isn't quite as good
As anyone. He won't be made ashamed
To please his brother, worthless though he is."

"*I* can't think Si ever hurt anyone."

"No, but he hurt my heart the way he lay
And rolled his old head on that sharp-edged chair-back.
He wouldn't let me put him on the lounge.
You must go in and see what you can do.
I made the bed up for him there to-night.
You'll be surprised at him — how much he's broken.
His working days are done; I'm sure of it."

"I'd not be in a hurry to say that."

"I haven't been. Go, look, see for yourself.
But, Warren, please remember how it is:
He's come to help you ditch the meadow.
He has a plan. You mustn't laugh at him.
He may not speak of it, and then he may.
I'll sit and see if that small sailing cloud
Will hit or miss the moon."

It hit the moon.
Then there were three there, making a dim row,
The moon, the little silver cloud, and she.
Warren returned — too soon, it seemed to her,
Slipped to her side, caught up her hand and waited.

"Warren," she questioned.

"Dead," was all he answered.

MENDING WALL

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, "Good fences make good neighbors."
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
"Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down." I could say "Elves" to him,

But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well.
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbors."

BIRCHES

When I see birches bend to left and right
Across the lines of straighter darker trees,
I like to think some boy's been swinging them.
But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay.
Ice-storms do that. Often you must have seen them
Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning
After a rain. They click upon themselves
As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored
As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.
Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells
Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust —
Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen.
They are dragged to the withered bracken by the load,
And they seem not to break; though once they are bowed
So low for long, they never right themselves:
You may see their trunks arching in the woods
Years afterwards, trailing their leaves on the ground
Like girls on hands and knees that throw their hair
Before them over their heads to dry in the sun.
But I was going to say when Truth broke in
With all her matter-of-fact about the ice-storm
(Now am I free to be poetical?)
I should prefer to have some boy bend them

As he went out and in to fetch the cows —
Some boy too far from town to learn baseball,
Whose only play was what he found himself,
Summer or winter, and could play alone.
One by one he subdued his father's trees
By riding them down over and over again
Until he took the stiffness out of them,
And not one but hung limp, not one was left
For him to conquer. He learned all there was
To learn about not launching out too soon
And so not carrying the tree away
Clear to the ground. He always kept his poise
To the top branches, climbing carefully
With the same pains you use to fill a cup
Up to the brim, and even above the brim.
Then he flung outward, feet first, with a swish,
Kicking his way down through the air to the ground.
So was I once myself a swinger of birches.
And so I dream of going back to be.
It's when I'm weary of considerations,
And life is too much like a pathless wood
Where your face burns and tickles with the cobwebs
Broken across it, and one eye is weeping
From a twig's having lashed across it open.
I'd like to get away from earth awhile
And then come back to it and begin over.
May no fate wilfully misunderstand me
And half grant what I wish and snatch me away
Not to return. Earth's the right place for love:
I don't know where it's likely to go better.
I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree,
And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk
Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more,
But dipped its top and set me down again.
That would be good both going and coming back.
One could do worse than be a swinger of birches.

"OUT, OUT ——"

The buzz-saw snarled and rattled in the yard
And made dust and dropped stove-length sticks of wood,
Sweet-scented stuff when the breeze drew across it.
And from there those that lifted eyes could count
Five mountain ranges one behind the other
Under the sunset far into Vermont.
And the saw snarled and rattled, snarled and rattled,
As it ran light, or had to bear a load.
And nothing happened: day was all but done.
Call it a day, I wish they might have said
To please the boy by giving him the half hour
That a boy counts so much when saved from work.
His sister stood beside them in her apron
To tell them "Supper." At the word, the saw,
As if to prove saws knew what supper meant,
Leaped out at the boy's hand, or seemed to leap —
He must have given the hand. However it was,
Neither refused the meeting. But the hand!
The boy's first outcry was a rueful laugh.
As he swung toward them holding up the hand
Half in appeal, but half as if to keep
The life from spilling. Then the boy saw all —
Since he was old enough to know, big boy
Doing a man's work, though a child at heart —
He saw all spoiled. "Don't let him cut my hand off —
The doctor, when he comes. Don't let him, sister!"
So. But the hand was gone already.
The doctor put him in the dark of ether.
He lay and puffed his lips out with his breath.
And then — the watcher at his pulse took fright.
No one believed. They listened at his heart.
Little — less — nothing! — and that ended it.
No more to build on there. And they, since they
Were not the one dead, turned to their affairs.

TO EARTHWARD

Love at the lips was touch
As sweet as I could bear;
And once that seemed too much;
I lived on air

That crossed me from sweet things,
The flow of — was it musk
From hidden grapevine springs
Down hill at dusk?

I had the swirl and ache
From sprays of honeysuckle
That when they're gathered shake
Dew on the knuckle.

I craved strong sweets, but those
Seemed strong when I was young;
The petal of the rose
It was that stung.

Now no joy but lacks salt
That is not dashed with pain
And weariness and fault;
I crave the stain

Of tears, the aftermark
Of almost too much love,
The sweet of bitter bark
And burning clove.

When stiff and sore and scarred
I take away my hand
From leaning on it hard
In grass and sand,

The hurt is not enough:
I long for weight and strength
To feel the earth as rough
To all my length.

CARL SANDBURG (1878–)

It was not till he was nearer forty than thirty that Carl Sandburg became known as an American poet. His early life was full of a variety of occupations. Early enough he was forced to make his own living. He worked as a scene-shifter, a truck-handler, a dish-washer, and a harvest hand. When the Spanish War of '98 came along, he "went for a soldier." After bearing his part of the burden and heat of the day in the Porto Rican campaign, Sandburg decided to get more education. He entered college in Galesburg, Illinois, where he had been born of Swedish stock. He made his mark there, both as a basket-ball player and in his editorship of the college literary magazine. Then it was "to work" again, and the versatile Sandburg became in turn an advertising manager, district organizer for the Social-Democratic party of Wisconsin, salesman, and newspaperman. His earliest small book of poems was published, without attracting any attention, in 1904. But it was ten years later that he first became known through a group of poems that Miss Harriet Monroe published in her *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*. For one of these he was awarded a prize in the same year. Two years later he gave us *Chicago Poems*, followed by *Cornhuskers* (1918), *Smoke and Steel* (1920), and *Slabs of the Sunburnt West* (1923). Three years after the last-named his remarkable biography of Lincoln's *Prairie Years* appeared, and he had meanwhile found time to write two *Rootabaga* books of tales for children. An excellent selection from his many poems

was edited by Rebecca West a year or two ago and published by Harcourt, Brace & Co.

Sandburg first attracted attention by the rough, tough, brutal directness of his free verse. But that quality is only one characteristic of Sandburg. He has an exulting, natural, Whitmanesque vigor. He has also a deep tenderness and sympathy, a shrewd, introspective gentleness. He uses the idiom of the streets with peculiar power. In private life he loves singing American folk-songs to his guitar, and has collected an invigorating volume of these in *The American Song-Bag*. Sandburg is a great and rugged figure in our contemporary literature. He has sung the squalor and the glory, the effort and the waste of the Middle West as authentically as Robert Frost has sung New England.

NOCTURNE IN A DESERTED BRICKYARD

Stuff of the moon
Runs on the lapping sand
Out to the longest shadows.
Under the curving willows,
And round the creep of the wave line,
Fluxions of yellow and dusk on the waters
Make a wide dreaming pansy of an old pond in the night.

CHICAGO

Hog Butcher for the World,
Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;
Stormy, husky, brawling,
City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked, and I believe them; for I have seen your painted women under the gas lamps luring the farm boys.

And they tell me you are crooked, and I answer: Yes, it is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to kill again.
And they tell me you are brutal, and my reply is: On the faces of women and children I have seen the marks of wanton hunger.
And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city, and I give them back the sneer and say to them:
Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.
Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against the little soft cities;
Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against the wilderness,
Bareheaded,
Shoveling,
Wrecking,
Planning,
Building, breaking, rebuilding,
Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,
Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,
Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,
Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs the heart of the people,
Laughing!
Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of youth; half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog-butcher, Tool-maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads, and Freight-handler to the Nation.

TO A CONTEMPORARY BUNKSHOOTER

You come along . . . tearing your shirt . . . yelling about Jesus.
Where do you get that stuff?
What do you know about Jesus?
Jesus had a way of talking soft and outside of a few bankers and higher-ups among the con men of Jerusalem everybody liked to have this Jesus around because he never made any fake passes and everything he said went and he helped the sick and gave the people hope.

You come along squirting words at us, shaking your fist and call us all dam fools so fierce the froth slobbers over your lips . . . always blabbing we're all going to hell straight off and you know all about it.

I've read Jesus' words. I know what he said. You don't throw any scare into me. I've got your number. I know how much you know about Jesus.
He never came near clean people or dirty people but they felt cleaner because he came along. It was your crowd of bankers and business men and lawyers hired the sluggers and murderers who put Jesus out of the running.
I say the same bunch backing you nailed the nails into the hands of this Jesus of Nazareth. He had lined up against him the same crooks and strong-arm men now lined up with you paying your way.

This Jesus was good to look at, smelled good, listened good. He threw out something fresh and beautiful from the skin of his body and the touch of his hands wherever he passed along.
You slimy bunkshooter, you put a smut on every human

blossom in reach of your rotten breath belching about hell-fire and hiccupping about this Man who lived a clean life in Galilee.

When are you going to quit making the carpenters build emergency hospitals for women and girls driven crazy with wrecked nerves from your gibberish about Jesus? — I put it to you again: Where do you get that stuff? what do you know about Jesus?

Go ahead and bust all the chairs you want to. Smash a whole wagon-load of furniture at every performance. Turn sixty somersaults and stand on your nutty head. If it wasn't for the way you scare the women and kids I'd feel sorry for you and pass the hat.

I like to watch a good four-flusher work, but not when he starts people puking and calling for the doctors.

I like a man that's got nerve and can pull off a great original performance, but you — you're only a bug-house pedlar of second-hand gospel — you're only shoving out a phoney imitation of the goods this Jesus wanted free as air and sunlight.

You tell people living in shanties Jesus is going to fix it up all right with them by giving them mansions in the skies after they're dead and the worms have eaten 'em.

You tell $6 a week department store girls all they need is Jesus; you take a steel trust wop, dead without having lived, grey and shrunken at forty years of age, and you tell him to look at Jesus on the cross and he'll be all right.

You tell poor people they don't need any more money on pay day and even if it's fierce to be out of a

job, Jesus'll fix that up all right, all right — all they gotta do is take Jesus the way you say.
I'm telling you Jesus wouldn't stand for the stuff you're handing out. Jesus played it different. The bankers and lawyers of Jerusalem got their sluggers and murderers to go after Jesus just because Jesus wouldn't play their game. He didn't sit in with the big thieves.

I don't want a lot of gab from a bunkshooter in my religion.
I won't take my religion from any man who never works except with his mouth and never cherishes any memory except the face of the woman on the American silver dollar.
I ask you to come through and show me where you're pouring out the blood of your life.
I've been to this suburb of Jerusalem they call Golgotha, where they nailed Him, and I know if the story is straight it was real blood ran from His hands and the nail-holes, and it was real blood spurted in red drops where the spear of the Roman soldier rammed in between the ribs of this Jesus of Nazareth.

GONE

Everybody loved Chick Lorimer in our town
Far off.
Everybody loved her.
So we all love a wild girl keeping a hold
On a dream she wants.
Nobody knows now where Chick Lorimer went.
Nobody knows why she packed her trunk . . . a few old things
And is gone,
Gone with her little chin
Thrust ahead of her 10

And her soft hair blowing careless
From under a wide hat,
Dancer, singer, a laughing passionate lover.

Were there ten men or a hundred hunting Chick?
Were there five men or fifty with aching hearts?
Everybody loved Chick Lorimer.
Nobody knows where she's gone.

OSSAWATOMIE

I DON'T know how he came,
shambling, dark, and strong.

He stood in the city and told men:
My people are fools, my people are young and strong, my people must learn, my people are terrible workers and fighters.
Always he kept on asking: Where did that blood come from?

They said: You for the fool killer,
you for the booby hatch
and a necktie party.

They hauled him into jail.
They sneered at him and spit on him,
And he wrecked their jails,
Singing, "God damn your jails,"
And when he was most in jail
Crummy among the crazy in the dark
Then he was most of all out of jail
Shambling, dark, and strong,
Always asking: Where did that blood come from?

They laid hands on him
And the fool killers had a laugh

And the necktie party was a go, by God.
They laid hands on him and he was a goner.
They hammered him to pieces and he stood up.
They buried him and he walked out of the grave, by God,
Asking again: Where did that blood come from?

VACHEL LINDSAY (1879–)

In Lindsay we have an unusual example of the artistic evangelist. He has many gifts, greatest of all his untamed imagination. He has created a new kind of poetry entirely his own. He began as an art student both in Chicago and in New York. He was born in Springfield, Illinois, the capital of the state, the city that remembers Lincoln. When about twenty-seven he began his long walking tours of a number of states, his first being through a part of the South. He was writing rhymes then and offering them in exchange for a meal and a bed for the night. He was also preaching a gospel of Beauty. Read his book of prose, which originally appeared in the same year as *The Congo and Other Poems* (Macmillan). It is entitled *Adventures While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty*. Earlier, on his tramps, he had given away a pamphlet called *Rhymes to be Traded for Bread*. In Springfield he wrote and illustrated *The Village Magazine*, devoted in a wild and Blakeian sense to civic betterment. Excerpts from this were printed in *Current Opinion* (then *Current Literature*) in New York and attracted attention. Mitchell Kennerley brought out his first poems, *General Booth Enters into Heaven*, in 1913. In Chicago, Miss Monroe had printed the title-poem in *Poetry*. The gusto and originality of the title-poem set people talking about Lindsay's art, and *The Congo*, published the next year, consolidated his position as a new singer who actually did sing — or rather chant — his own works in public with a most

original rhetorical delivery. Three years later came *The Chinese Nightingale* (Macmillan), then, in 1920, *The Golden Whales of California*, and his *Collected Poems* (Macmillan) in 1923. He has also written, among other work, *The Art of the Moving Picture* (1915) and *The Golden Book of Springfield* (1920).

Lindsay is a rhapsodist and fantasist of blazing imagination. He has also seen himself as a prophet, but his own particular type of artistic propaganda is not so important as the aural and visual impact of his strange visions. He is like an archangel walking in a Kansas cornfield. In the last few years his rhythmic power seems to have lessened; the mastery of the medium he fashioned for himself has decreased. He has always resented being pigeonholed as a "jazz poet." He is, fundamentally, quite the opposite indeed. He is a wild preacher of apocalypses and millenniums. He is the William Blake of our modern industrial age. He has been a tremendously invigorating influence in our literature, a mystic who has translated the chaos and noise of modern America into verbal music of an entirely new order. His proselytizing may be forgotten later, but his strong and vivid chants are of durable significance.

From THE CONGO[1]

(A Study of the Negro Race)

I. Their Basic Savagery

Fat black bucks in a wine-barrel room,
Barrel-house kings, with feet unstable, *A deep rolling bass.*
Sagged and reeled and pounded on the
table,
Pounded on the table,

[1] From Vachel Lindsay, *The Congo.* Copyright, 1914, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Beat an empty barrel with the handle of a broom,
Hard as they were able,
Boom, boom, BOOM,
With a silk umbrella and the handle of a broom,
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, BOOM.

THEN I had religion, THEN I had a vision.
I could not turn from their revel in derision.
THEN I SAW THE CONGO, CREEPING THROUGH THE BLACK,
CUTTING THROUGH THE JUNGLE WITH A GOLDEN TRACK.
Then along that riverbank
A thousand miles
Tattooed cannibals danced in files;
Then I heard the boom of the blood-lust song
And a thigh-bone beating on a tin-pan gong.

More deliberate. Solemnly chanted.

A rapidly piling climax of speed and racket.

And "BLOOD" screamed the whistles and the fifes of the warriors,
"BLOOD" screamed the skull-faced, lean witch-doctors,
"Whirl ye the deadly voo-doo rattle,
Harry the uplands,
Steal all the cattle,
Rattle-rattle, rattle-rattle,
Bing!
Boomlay, boomlay, boomlay, BOOM,"
A roaring, epic, rag-time tune
From the mouth of the Congo
To the Mountains of the Moon.
Death is an Elephant,
Torch-eyed and horrible,
Foam-flanked and terrible.

With a philosophic pause.

Shrilly and with a heavily accented meter.

Boom, steal the pygmies,
Boom, kill the Arabs,
Boom, kill the white men,
Hoo, Hoo, Hoo. *Like the wind in the chimney.*
Listen to the yell of Leopold's ghost
Burning in Hell for his hand-maimed host.
Hear how the demons chuckle and yell.
Cutting his hands off, down in Hell.
Listen to the creepy proclamation,
Blown through the lairs of the forest-nation,
Blown past the white-ant's hill of clay,
Blown past the marsh where the butterflies play: —
"Be careful what you do,
Or Mumbo-Jumbo, God of the Congo, *All the o sounds very golden. Heavy accents very heavy. Light accents very light. Last line whispered.*
And all of the other
Gods of the Congo,
Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you,
Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you,
Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you."

. . . . . .

III. The Hope of their Religion

A good old negro in the slums of the town *Heavy bass. With a literal imitation of camp-meeting racket, and trance.*
Preached at a sister for her velvet gown.
Howled at a brother for his low-down ways,
His prowling, guzzling, sneak-thief days.
Beat on the Bible till he wore it out,
Starting the jubilee revival shout.
And some had visions, as they stood on chairs,
And sang of Jacob, and the golden stairs.
And they all repented, a thousand strong,
From their stupor and savagery and sin and wrong
And slammed their hymn books till they shook the room

With "Glory, glory, glory,"
And "Boom, boom, BOOM."

THEN I SAW THE CONGO, CREEPING THROUGH THE BLACK,
CUTTING THROUGH THE JUNGLE WITH A GOLDEN TRACK.
And the gray sky opened like a new-rent veil
And showed the apostles with their coats of mail.
In bright white steel they were seated round
And their fire-eyes watched where the Congo wound.
And the twelve apostles, from their thrones on high,
Thrilled all the forest with their heavenly cry: —
"Mumbo-Jumbo will die in the jungle;
Never again will he hoo-doo you,
Never again will he hoo-doo you."

Exactly as in the first section.

Sung to the tune of "Hark, ten thousand harps and voices."

Then along that river, a thousand miles,
The vine-snared trees fell down in files.
Pioneer angels cleared the way
For a Congo paradise, for babes at play,
For sacred capitals, for temples clean.
Gone were the skull-faced witch-men lean.
There, where the wild ghost-gods had wailed
A million boats of the angels sailed
With oars of silver, and prows of blue
And silken pennants that the sun shone through.

With growing deliberation and joy.

In a rather high key — as delicately as possible.

'Twas a land transfigured, 'twas a new
creation.
Oh, a singing wind swept the negro nation;
And on through the backwoods clearing
flew: —
"Mumbo-Jumbo is dead in the jungle. *To the tune of "Hark, ten thousand harps and voices."*
Never again will he hoo-doo you,
Never again will he hoo-doo you."

Redeemed were the forests, the beasts and
the men,
And only the vulture dared again
By the far, lone mountains of the moon
To cry, in the silence, the Congo tune: —
"Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you. *Dying off into a penetrating, terrified whisper.*
Mumbo-Jumbo will hoo-doo you,
Mumbo . . . Jumbo . . . will . . . hoo-doo
. . . you."

GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH ENTERS INTO HEAVEN [1]

To be sung to the tune of "The Blood of the Lamb" with indicated instruments

Booth led boldly with his big bass drum.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
The saints smiled gravely, and they said,
"He's come."
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb? *Bass drums*
Walking lepers followed, rank on rank,
Lurching bravos from the ditches dank,
Drabs from the alleyways and drug-fiends
pale —
Minds still passion-ridden, soul-powers frail!

[1] From Vachel Lindsay, *General William Booth Enters Into Heaven.* Copyright, 1913, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Vermin-eaten saints with mouldy breath,
Unwashed legions with the ways of death —
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Every slum had sent its half-a-score
The round world over — Booth had groaned
for more.
Every banner that the wide world flies
Bloomed with glory and transcendent dyes.
Big-voiced lasses made their banjos bang! *Banjos*
Tranced, fanatical, they shrieked and sang,
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Hallelujah! It was queer to see
Bull-necked convicts with that land make
free!
Loons with bazoos blowing blare, blare,
blare —
On, on, upward through the golden air.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Booth died blind, and still by faith he trod,
Eyes still dazzled by the ways of God.
Booth led boldly and he looked the chief: *Bass drums slower and softer*
Eagle countenance in sharp relief,
Beard a-flying, air of high command
Unabated in that holy land.

Jesus came from out the Court-House door,
Stretched his hands above the passing poor.
Booth saw not, but led his queer ones there *Flute*
Round and round the mighty Court-House
square.
Yet in an instant all that blear review
Marched on spotless, clad in raiment new.
The lame were straightened, withered limbs
uncurled

And blind eyes opened on a new sweet
world.

Drabs and vixens in a flash made whole! *Bass drums louder and faster*
Gone was the weasel-head, the snout, the
jowl;
Sages and sibyls now, and athletes clean,
Rulers of empires, and of forests green!
The hosts were sandalled and their wings
were fire ——
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?
But their noise played havoc with the angel-
choir. *Grand chorus tambourines —— all instruments in full blast.*
Are you washed in the blood of the
Lamb?
Oh, shout Salvation! it was good to see
Kings and princes by the Lamb set free.
The banjos rattled and the tambourines
Jing-jing-jingled in the hands of Queens!

And when Booth halted by the curb for
prayer,
He saw his Master through the flag-filled
air.

Christ came gently with a robe and crown
For Booth the Soldier while the throng *Reverently Sung — no instruments*
knelt down.
He saw King Jesus — they were face to
face,
And he knelt a-weeping in that holy place.
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

THE CHINESE NIGHTINGALE [1]

A Song in Chinese Tapestries
Dedicated to S. T. F.

"How, how," he said. "Friend Chang," I said,
"San Francisco sleeps as the dead —
Ended license, lust and play:
Why do you iron the night away?
Your big clock speaks with a deadly sound,
With a tick and a wail till dawn comes round.
While the monster shadows glower and creep,
What can be better for man than sleep?"

"I will tell you a secret," Chang replied;
"My breast with vision is satisfied,
And I see green trees and fluttering wings,
And my deathless bird from Shanghai sings."
Then he lit five fire-crackers in a pan.
"Pop, pop!" said the fire-crackers, "cra-cra-crack!"
He lit a joss-stick long and black.
Then the proud gray joss in the corner stirred;
On his wrist appeared a gray small bird,
And this was the song of the gray small bird:

"Where is the princess, loved forever,
Who made Chang first of the kings of men?"

And the joss in the corner stirred again;
And the carved dog, curled in his arms, awoke,
Barked forth a smoke-cloud that whirled and broke.
It piled in a maze round the ironing-place,
And there on the snowy table wide
Stood a Chinese lady of high degree,
With a scornful, witching, tea-rose face . . .
Yet she put away all form and pride,

[1] From Vachel Lindsay, *The Chinese Nightingale*. Copyright, 1917, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

And laid her glimmering veil aside
With a childlike smile for Chang and for me.

The walls fell back, night was aflower,
The table gleamed in a moonlit bower,
While Chang, with a countenance carved of stone,
Ironed and ironed, all alone.
And thus she sang to the busy man Chang:
"Have you forgotten . . .
Deep in the ages, long, long ago,
I was your sweetheart, there on the sand —
Storm-worn beach of the Chinese land?
We sold our grain in the peacock town
Built on the edge of the sea-sands brown —
Built on the edge of the sea-sands brown . . .

"When all the world was drinking blood
From the skulls of men and bulls,
And all the world had swords and clubs of stone,
We drank our tea in China beneath the sacred spice-trees,
And heard the curled waves of the harbor moan.
And this gray bird, in Love's first spring,
With a bright-bronze breast and a bronze-brown wing,
Captured the world with his carolling.
Do you remember, ages after,
At last the world we were born to own?
You were the heir of the yellow throne —
The world was the field of the Chinese man
And we were the pride of the sons of Han.
We copied deep books, and we carved in jade,
And wove white silks in the mulberry shade." . . .

"I remember, I remember
That Spring came on forever,
That Spring came on forever,"
Said the Chinese nightingale.

My heart was filled with marvel and dream,
Though I saw the western street-lamps gleam,
Though dawn was bringing the western day,
Though Chang was a laundryman ironing away . . .
Mingled there with the streets and alleys,
The railroad-yard, and the clock-tower bright,
Demon-clouds crossed ancient valleys:
Across wide lotus-ponds of light
I marked a giant firefly's flight.

And the lady, rosy-red,
Opened her fan, closed her fan,
Stretched her hand toward Chang, and said:
"Do you remember,
Ages after,
Our palace of heart-red stone?
Do you remember
The little doll-faced children
With their lanterns full of moon-fire,
That came from all the empire
Honoring the throne? —
The loveliest fête and carnival
Our world had ever known?
The sages sat about us
With their heads bowed in their beards,
With proper meditation on the sight.
Confucius was not born;
We lived in those great days
Confucius later said were lived aright . . .
And this gray bird, on that day of spring,
With a bright-bronze breast and a bronze-brown wing,
Captured the world with his carolling.
Late at night his tune was spent.
Peasants,
Sages,
Children,
Homeward went,

And then the bronze bird sang for you and me.
We walked alone, our hearts were high and free.
I had a silvery name, I had a silvery name,
I had a silvery name — do you remember
The name you cried beside the tumbling sea?"

Chang turned not to the lady slim —
He bent to his work, ironing away;
But she was arch and knowing and glowing.
And the bird on his shoulder spoke for him.

"Darling . . . darling . . . darling . . . darling . . ."
Said the Chinese nightingale.
. . . . . .

The great gray joss on a rustic shelf,
Rakish and shrewd, with his collar awry,
Sang impolitely, as though by himself,
Drowning with his bellowing the nightingale's cry:
"Back through a hundred, hundred years
Hear the waves as they climb the piers,
Hear the howl of the silver seas,
Hear the thunder!
Hear the gongs of holy China
How the waves and tunes combine
In a rhythmic clashing wonder,
Incantation old and fine:
'Dragons, dragons, Chinese dragons;
Red fire-crackers, and green fire-crackers,
And dragons, dragons, Chinese dragons.'"

Then the lady, rosy-red,
Turned to her lover Chang and said:
"Dare you forget that turquoise dawn
When we stood in our mist-hung velvet lawn,
And worked a spell this great joss taught
Till a God of the Dragons was charmed and caught?
From the flag high over our palace-home

He flew to our feet in rainbow-foam —
A king of beauty and tempest and thunder
Panting to tear our sorrows asunder,
A dragon of fair adventure and wonder.
We mounted the back of that royal slave
With thoughts of desire that were noble and grave.
We swam down the shore to the dragon-mountains,
We whirled to the peaks and the fiery fountains.
To our secret ivory house we were borne.
We looked down the wonderful wing-filled regions
Where the dragons darted in glimmering legions.
Right by my breast the nightingale sang;
The old rhymes rang in the sunlit mist
That we this hour regain —
Song-fire for the brain.
When my hands and my hair and my feet you kissed,
When you cried for your heart's new pain,
What was my name in the dragon-mist,
In the rings of rainbowed rain?"

"Sorrow and love, glory and love,"
Said the Chinese nightingale.
"Sorrow and love, glory and love,"
Said the Chinese nightingale.

And now the joss broke in with his song:
"Dying ember, bird of Chang,
Soul of Chang, do you remember? —
Ere you returned to the shining harbor
There were pirates by ten thousand
Descended on the town
In vessels mountain-high and red and brown,
Moon-ships that climbed the storms and cut the skies.
On their prows were painted terrible bright eyes.
But I was then a wizard and a scholar and a priest;
I stood upon the sand;
With lifted hand I looked upon them

And sunk their vessels with my wizard eyes,
And the stately lacquer-gate made safe again.
Deep, deep below the bay, the sea-weed and the spray,
Embalmed in amber every pirate lies,
Embalmed in amber every pirate lies."

Then this did the noble lady say:
"Bird, do you dream of our home-coming day
When you flew like a courier on before
From the dragon-peak to our palace-door,
And we drove the steed in your singing path —
The ramping dragon of laughter and wrath;
And found our city all aglow,
And knighted this joss that decked it so?
There were golden fishes in the purple river
And silver fishes and rainbow fishes.
There were golden junks in the laughing river,
And silver junks and rainbow junks:
There were golden lilies by the bay and river,
And silver lilies and tiger-lilies,
And tinkling wind-bells in the gardens of the town
By the black-lacquer gate
Where walked in state
The kind king Chang
And his sweet-heart mate . . .
With his flag-born dragon
And his crown of pearl . . . and . . . jade;
And his nightingale reigning in the mulberry shade,
And sailors and soldiers on the sea-sands brown,
And priests who bowed them down to your song —
By the city called Han, the peacock town,
By the city called Han, the nightingale town,
The nightingale town."

Then sang the bird, so strangely gay,
Fluttering, fluttering, ghostly and gray,
A vague, unravelling, answering tune,

Like a long unwinding silk cocoon;
Sang as though for the soul of him
Who ironed away in that bower dim:

"I have forgotten
Your dragons great,
Merry and mad and friendly and bold.
Dim is your proud lost palace-gate.
I vaguely know
There were heroes of old,
Troubles more than the heart could hold,
There were wolves in the woods
Yet lambs in the fold,
Nests in the top of the almond tree . . .
The evergreen tree . . . and the mulberry tree . . .
Life and hurry and joy forgotten,
Years on years I but half-remember . . .
Man is a torch, then ashes soon,
May and June, then dead December,
Dead December, then again June.
Who shall end my dream's confusion?
Life is a loom, weaving illusion . . .
I remember, I remember
There were ghostly veils and laces . . .
In the shadowy, bowery places . . .
With lovers' ardent faces
Bending to one another,
Speaking each his part.
They infinitely echo
In the red cave of my heart.
'Sweetheart, sweetheart, sweetheart!'
They said to one another.
They spoke, I think, of perils past.
They spoke, I think, of peace at last.
One thing I remember:
Spring came on forever,
Spring came on forever,"
Said the Chinese nightingale.

THE EAGLE THAT IS FORGOTTEN[1]

(John P. Altgeld. Born December 30, 1847;
died March 12, 1902)

SLEEP softly . . . eagle forgotten . . . under the stone,
Time has its way with you there, and the clay has its own.
"We have buried him now," thought your foes, and in secret rejoiced.
They made a brave show of their mourning, their hatred unvoiced.
They had snarled at you, barked at you, foamed at you, day after day,
Now you were ended. They praised you, . . . and laid you away.

The others that mourned you in silence and terror and truth,
The widow bereft of her pittance, the boy without youth,
The mocked and the scorned and the wounded, the lame and the poor,
That should have remembered forever . . . remember no more.
Where are those lovers of yours, on what name do they call —
The lost, that in armies wept over your funeral pall?
They call on the names of a hundred high-valiant ones;
A hundred white eagles have risen, the sons of your sons.
The zeal in their wings is a zeal that your dreaming began,
The valor that wore out your soul in the service of man.

[1] From Vachel Lindsay, *General William Booth Enters Into Heaven.* Copyright, 1913, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Sleep softly . . . eagle forgotten . . . under the stone.
Time has its way with you there and the clay has its own.
Sleep on, O brave-hearted, O wise man, that kindled the flame —
To live in mankind is far more than to live in a name;
To live in mankind, far, far more . . . than to live in a name.

THE GHOSTS OF THE BUFFALOES [1]

Would I might rouse the Lincoln in you all,
That which is gendered in the wilderness
From lonely prairies and God's tenderness.
Imperial soul, star of a weedy stream,
Born where the ghosts of buffaloes still dream,
Whose spirit hoof-beats storm above his grave,
Above that breast of earth and prairie-fire —
Fire that freed the slave.

Last night at black midnight I woke with a cry,
The windows were shaking, there was thunder on high,
The floor was a-tremble, the door was a-jar,
White fires, crimson fires, shone from afar.
I rushed to the door yard. The city was gone.
My home was a hut without orchard or lawn.
It was mud-smear and logs near a whispering stream,
Nothing else built by man could I see in my dream . . .
Then . . .
Ghost-kings came headlong, row upon row,
Gods of the Indians, torches aglow.

They mounted the bear and the elk and the deer,
And eagles gigantic, aged and sere,
They rode long-horn cattle, they cried "A-la-la."

[1] From Vachel Lindsay, *The Chinese Nightingale*. Copyright, 1917, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

They lifted the knife, the bow, and the spear,
They lifted ghost-torches from dead fires below,
The midnight made grand with the cry "A-la-la."
The midnight made grand with a red-god charge,
A red-god show,
A red-god show,
"A-la-la, a-la-la, a-la-la, a-la-la."

With bodies like bronze, and terrible eyes
Came the rank and the file, with catamount cries,
Gibbering, yipping, with hollow-skull clacks,
Riding white bronchos with skeleton backs,
Scalp-hunters, beaded and spangled and bad,
Naked and lustful and foaming and mad,
Flashing primeval demoniac scorn,
Blood-thirst and pomp amid darkness reborn,
Power and glory that sleep in the grass
While the winds and the snows and the great rains pass.
They crossed the gray river, thousands abreast,
They rode in infinite lines to the west,
Tide upon tide of strange fury and foam,
Spirits and wraiths, the blue was their home,
The sky was their goal where the star-flags are furled,
And on past those far golden splendors they whirled.
They burned to dim meteors, lost in the deep.
And I turned in dazed wonder, thinking of sleep.

And the wind crept by
Alone, unkempt, unsatisfied,
The wind cried and cried —
Muttered of massacres long past,
Buffaloes in shambles vast . . .
An owl said: "Hark, what is a-wing?"
I heard a cricket carolling,
I heard a cricket carolling,
I heard a cricket carolling.

Then . . .
Snuffing the lightning that crashed from on high
Rose royal old buffaloes, row upon row.
The lords of the prairie came galloping by.
And I cried in my heart "A-la-la, a-la-la,
A red-god show,
A red-god show,
A-la-la, a-la-la, a-la-la, a-la-la."

Buffaloes, buffaloes, thousands abreast,
A scourge and amazement, they swept to the west.
With black bobbing noses, with red rolling tongues,
Coughing forth steam from their leather-wrapped lungs,
Cows with their calves, bulls big and vain,
Goring the laggards, shaking the mane,
Stamping flint feet, flashing moon eyes,
Pompous and owlish, shaggy and wise.
Like sea-cliffs and caves resounded their ranks
With shoulders like waves, and undulant flanks.
Tide upon tide of strange fury and foam,
Spirits and wraiths, the blue was their home,
The sky was their goal where the star-flags are furled,
And on past those far golden splendors they whirled.
They burned to dim meteors, lost in the deep,
And I turned in dazed wonder, thinking of sleep.

I heard a cricket's cymbals play,
A scarecrow lightly flapped his rags,
And a pan that hung by his shoulder rang,
Rattled and thumped in a listless way,
And now the wind in the chimney sang,
The wind in the chimney,
The wind in the chimney,
The wind in the chimney,
Seemed to say: —
"Dream, boy, dream,
If you anywise can.

To dream is the work
Of beast or man.
Life is the west-going dream-storm's breath,
Life is a dream, the sigh of the skies,
The breath of the stars, that nod on their pillows
With their golden hair mussed over their eyes."
The locust played on his musical wing,
Sang to his mate of love's delight.
I heard the whippoorwill's soft fret.
I heard a cricket carolling,
I heard a cricket carolling,
I heard a cricket say: "Good-night, good-night,
Good-night, good-night, . . . good-night."

EZRA POUND (1885–)

Ezra Pound, now editing from time to time a small and peculiar transatlantic periodical known as *The Exile*, from Rapallo, Italy, remains, since Henry James is dead, perhaps America's most important literary exile. He was born in Idaho, was educated at Hamilton and the University of Pennsylvania, and went abroad at the age of twenty-three. He sailed for Spain and thence went to Italy where his first book, *Lume Spento*, was published the same year. In London, the year following, he winnowed the best from this earliest volume for *Personæ*, published by Elkin Mathews in April, 1909. Anent *Personæ*, some words in *Punch* at the time (amid the general praise that greeted the book) have always seemed to us to go to the root of the matter. "He has succeeded where all others have failed, in evolving a blend of the imagery of the unfettered west, the vocabulary of Wardour Street, and the sinister abandon of Borgiac Italy." Four of his poems that have worn best with time were in that first volume, *Ballad for Gloom*, *For E. McC*, *The White Stag*, and *Piccadilly*. In the

next book, *Exultations*, published that same fall, his *Ballad of the Goodly Fere* was notable. Pound, with a passionate interest in the Provençal troubadours, had set out to be strikingly erudite, acknowledging in an amusing doggerel the influence of Robert Browning. *Canzoni* and *Ripostes* were his next books, spaced two years apart. He also translated the sonnets of Guido Cavalcanti and paraphrased from translations from the Chinese. In 1917 came *Lustra*, and now we have available a final *Personæ* (Horace Liveright), a selection of the best from all his books, the sum of his attainment to date. He was one of the first to take a vital interest in the Imagist movement.

In 1914 Wyndham Lewis had started in England a periodical called *Blast*. It aimed to destroy "the 'academic' of the Royal Academy tradition." Pound took a hand. Lewis has since spoken of the discrepancy between the kind of work that Pound supported and held up as an example and the kind of writing he himself did. He has spoken of Pound's "antiquarian and romantic tendencies, his velvet-jacket and his blustering trouvère airs." In the last few years Pound's new interest has been music, particularly the music of George Antheil. Pound himself has, indeed, been composing. Lewis thinks that "his inspiration is of a precarious order, attached as it is to what he regards as his rôle, handed him by a shadow to whose authority he is extremely susceptible, a Public he despises, is afraid of, and serves."

However that may be, Pound has always been an instigator, a generous champion of any artistic expression he felt to be valuable, a lively toreador figure in contemporary letters. He has taken part in many artistic movements, has set off whole packs of controversial fire crackers, but his theories and temporary affiliations have never changed his deep-rooted predilections when he came to write his own poetry. Despite

all his playboying he has given us some most subtle and beautiful scattered poems, archaic, intensely mannered, often — of late — too elliptical and cluttered with odds and ends of obscure scholarship to mean much to our day, but always intensely individual and above the taint of the market-place.

BALLAD OF THE GOODLY FERE

Simon Zelotes speaketh it somewhile after the Crucifixion
Fere = Mate, Companion

Ha' we lost the goodliest fere o' all
For the priests and the gallows tree?
Aye lover he was of brawny men,
O' ships and the open sea.

When they came wi' a host to take Our Man
His smile was good to see,
"First let these go!" quo' our Goodly Fere,
"Or I'll see ye damned," says he.

Aye he sent us out through the crossed high spears
And the scorn of his laugh rang free,
"Why took ye not me when I walked about
Alone in the town?" says he.

Oh we drunk his "Hale" in the good red wine
When we last made company,
No capon priest was the Goodly Fere
But a man o' men was he.

I ha' seen him drive a hundred men
Wi' a bundle o' cords swung free,
That they took the high and holy house
For their pawn and treasury.

They'll no' get him a' in a book I think
Though they write it cunningly;
No mouse of the scrolls was the Goodly Fere
But aye loved the open sea.

If they think they ha' snared our Goodly Fere
They are fools to the last degree.
"I'll go to the feast," quo' our Goodly Fere,
"Though I go to the gallows tree."

"Ye ha' seen me heal the lame and blind,
And wake the dead," says he,
"Ye shall see one thing to master all:
'Tis how a brave man dies on the tree."

A son of God was the Goodly Fere
That bade us his brothers be.
I ha' seen him cow a thousand men.
I have seen him upon the tree.

He cried no cry when they drave the nails
And the blood gushed hot and free,
The hounds of the crimson sky gave tongue
But never a cry cried he.

I ha' seen him cow a thousand men
On the hills o' Galilee,
They whined as he walked out calm between,
Wi' his eyes like the grey o' the sea,

Like the sea that brooks no voyaging
With the winds unleashed and free,
Like the sea that he cowed at Genseret
Wi' twey words spoke' suddently.

A master of men was the Goodly Fere,
A mate of the wind and sea,

If they think they ha' slain our Goodly Fere
They are fools eternally.

I ha' seen him eat o' the honey-comb
Sin' they nailed him to the tree.

A VIRGINAL

No, no! Go from me. I have left her lately.
I will not spoil my sheath with lesser brightness,
For my surrounding air hath a new lightness;
Slight are her arms, yet they have bound me straitly
And left me cloaked as with a gauze of æther;
As with sweet leaves; as with subtle clearness.
Oh, I have picked up magic in her nearness
To sheathe me half in half the things that sheathe her.
No, no! Go from me. I have still the flavour,
Soft as spring wind that's come from birchen bowers.
Green come the shoots, aye April in the branches,
As winter's wound with her sleight hand she staunches,
Hath of the trees a likeness of the savour:
As white their bark, so white this lady's hours.

PROVINCIA DESERTA

At Rochecoart,
Where the hills part
in three ways,
And three valleys, full of winding roads,
Fork out to south and north,
There is a place of trees . . . gray with lichen.
I have walked there
thinking of old days.
At Chalais
is a pleached arbour;
Old pensioners and old protected women
Have the right there —
it is charity.

I have crept over old rafters,
peering down
Over the Dronne,
over a stream full of lilies.
Eastward the road lies,
Aubeterre is eastward,
With a garrulous old man at the inn.
I know the roads in that place·
Mareuil to the north-east,
La Tour,
There are three keeps near Mareuil,
And an old woman,
glad to hear Arnaut,
Glad to lend one dry clothing.

I have walked
into Perigord,
I have seen the torch-flames, high-leaping,
Painting the front of that church;
Heard, under the dark, whirling laughter.
I have looked back over the stream
and seen the high building,
Seen the long minarets, the white shafts.
I have gone in Ribeyrac
and in Sarlat,
I have climbed rickety stairs, heard talk of Croy,
Walked over En Bertran's old layout,
Have seen Narbonne, and Cahors and Chalus,
Have seen Excideuil, carefully fashioned.

I have said:
"Here such a one walked.
"Here Cœur-de-Lion was slain.
"Here was good singing.
"Here one man hastened his step.
"Here one lay panting."

I have looked south from Hautefort,
thinking of Montaignac, southward.
I have lain in Rocafixada,
level with sunset,
Have seen the copper come down
tingeing the mountains,
I have seen the fields, pale, clear as an emerald,
Sharp peaks, high spurs, distant castles.
I have said: "The old roads have lain here.
"Men have gone by such and such valleys
"Where the great halls were closer together."
I have seen Foix on its rock, seen Toulouse, and
Arles greatly altered,
I have seen the ruined "Dorata."
I have said:
"Riquier! Guido."
I have thought of the second Troy,
Some little prized place in Auvergnat:
Two men tossing a coin, one keeping a castle,
One set on the highway to sing.
He sang a woman.
Auvergne rose to the song;
The Dauphin backed him.
"The castle to Austors!"
"Pieire kept the singing —
"A fair man and a pleasant."
He won the lady,
Stole her away for himself, kept her against armed
force:
So ends that story.
That age is gone;
Pieire de Maensac is gone.
I have walked over these roads;
I have thought of them living.

T. S. ELIOT (1888–)

THE English critic, I. A. Richards, has found *The Waste Land*, by T. S. Eliot the one poem written since the Great War that is most deeply significant of the present plight of a still living generation of artists. *The Waste Land* (Knopf), upon its appearance in book form, aroused raging controversy. Many still regard it as a mere meaningless hodge-podge. Others are still deeply moved by it and continue to praise its allusiveness and concise dexterity. It appeared in 1922. Its theme is futility, that feeling of futility engendered in many sensitive minds by the aftermath of a terrific international conflict, with all the horrors and all the spiritual disillusionment it involved. It is an obscure poem, a difficult poem, a pedantic poem. It is a mélange of quotation and allusion. "These fragments shored against my ruins," says the poet at the end. But, for all the faults cited against it, it is undeniably impressive.

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, Thomas Stearns Eliot graduated from Harvard in 1909. He then went abroad, after an M.A. year, to study at the Sorbonne and at Oxford. He became a teacher, and has since held a position in a bank. Meanwhile he was one of the editors of *The Egoist* while that periodical was in existence, and afterward founded *The Criterion*, which he still edits. Eliot's *Poems*, his first book to appear in America has recently been reissued in a new edition. Selections from his work originally appeared over here in Miss Monroe's *Poetry*, though his *Prufrock* was published in England in 1917, and John Rodker's edition of his poems, *Ara Vus Prec*, in 1919. He was not available to us in book form until 1920. His work now includes, beside poetry, the literary criticism to be found in *The Sacred Wood* (Knopf, 1921), and the essays in *Homage to John Dryden* (1924) and a more recent work.

Eliot is as sharp an individualist as Ezra Pound, and

of intention as much "caviare to the general." But he writes with extraordinary subtlety, sly wit, and, most of all, a profound melancholy and nostalgia that are intense with genuine repressed emotion. He can strike out phrases and images of unusual force and beauty. His work is never without manifest distinction.

SALUTATION

e vo significando.

LADY, three white leopards sat under a juniper tree
In the cool of the day, having fed to satiety
On my legs my heart my liver and that which had been contained
In the hollow round of my skull. And God said
Can these bones live? Can these
Bones live? And that which had been contained
In the bones (which were already dry) said chirping:
Because of the goodness of this Lady
And because of her loveliness, and because
She honours the Virgin in meditation,
We shine with brightness. And I who am here dissembled
Proffer my deeds to oblivion, and my love
To the posterity of the desert and the fruit of the gourd.
It is this which recovers
My guts the strings of my eyes and the indigestible portions
Which the leopards reject. The Lady is withdrawn
In a white gown, to contemplation, in a white gown.
Let the whiteness of bones atone to forgetfulness.
There is no life in them. As I am forgotten
And would be forgotten, so I would forget
Thus devoted, concentrated in purpose. —— And God said
Prophesy to the wind, to the wind only for only

The wind will listen. And the bones sang chirping
With the burden of the grasshopper, saying

Lady of silences
Calm and distressed
Torn and most whole
Rose of memory
Rose of forgetfulness
Spattered and worshipped
Exhausted and life-giving
Worried reposeful
The single Rose
With worm eaten petals
Is now the Garden
Where all loves end
Terminate torment
Of love unsatisfied
The greater torment
Of love satisfied
End of the endless
Journey to no end
Conclusion of all that
Is inconclusible
Speech without word and
Word of no speech
Grace to the Mother
For the end of remembering
End of forgetting
For the Garden
Where all love ends

Under a juniper tree the bones sang, scattered and shining.
We are glad to be scattered, we did little good to each other.
Under a tree in the cool of the day, with the blessing of sand.

Forgetting themselves and each other, united
In the quiet of the desert. This is the land which ye
Shall divide by lot. And neither division nor unity
Matter. This is the land. We have our inheritance.

PORTRAIT OF A LADY

I

Among the smoke and fog of a December afternoon
You have the scene arrange itself — as it will seem to do —
With "I have saved this afternoon for you";
And four wax candles in the darkened room,
Four rings of light upon the ceiling overhead:
An atmosphere of Juliet's tomb
Prepared for all the things to be said, or left unsaid.

We have been, let us say, to hear the latest Pole
Transmit the Preludes, through his hair and finger-tips.
"So intimate, this Chopin, that I think his soul
Should be resurrected only among friends —
Some two or three, who will not touch the bloom
That is rubbed and questioned in the concert room."

And so the conversation slips
Among velleities and carefully caught regrets,
Through attenuated tones of violins
Mingled with remote cornets,
And begins:
"You do not know how much they mean to me, my friends;
And how, how rare and strange it is, to find,
In a life composed so much, so much of odds and ends —
(For indeed I do not love it . . . you knew? you are not blind!
How keen you are!)
To find a friend who has these qualities.

Who has, and gives
Those qualities upon which friendship lives:
How much it means that I say this to you —
Without these friendships — life, what *cauchemar!*"

Among the windings of the violins,
And the ariettes
Of cracked cornets,
Inside my brain a dull tom-tom begins
Absurdly hammering a prelude of its own —
Capricious monotone
That is at least one definite "false note."
Let us take the air, in a tobacco trance,
Admire the monuments,
Discuss the late events,
Correct our watches by the public clocks;
Then sit for half an hour and drink our bocks.

II

Now that lilacs are in bloom
She has a bowl of lilacs in her room
And twists one in her fingers while she talks.
"Ah my friend, you do not know, you do not know
What life is, you who hold it in your hands —"
(Slowly twisting the lilac stalks);
"You let it flow from you, you let it flow,
And youth is cruel, and has no remorse,
And smiles at situations which it cannot see."
I smile, of course,
And go on drinking tea.
"Yet with these April sunsets, that somehow recall
My buried life, and Paris in the spring,
I feel immeasurably at peace, and find the world
To be wonderful and youthful, after all."

The voice returns like the insistent out-of-tune
Of a broken violin on an August afternoon:

"I am always sure that you understand
My feelings, always sure that you feel,
Sure that across the gulf you reach your hand.

"You are invulnerable, you have no Achilles' heel.
You will go on, and when you have prevailed
You can say: 'At this point many a one has failed.'
But what have I, but what have I, my friend,
To give you, what can you receive from me?
Only the friendship and the sympathy
Of one about to reach her journey's end.

"I shall sit here, serving tea to friends . . ."

I take my hat: how can I make a cowardly amends
For what she has said to me?

You will see me any morning in the park
Reading the comics and the sporting page.
Particularly I remark
An English countess goes upon the stage,
A Greek was murdered at a Polish dance,
Another bank defaulter has confessed.
I keep my countenance,
I remain self-possessed
Except when a street piano, mechanical and tired,
Reiterates some worn-out common song,
With the smell of hyacinths across the garden
Recalling things that other people have desired.
Are these ideas right or wrong?

III

The October night comes down. Returning as before,
Except for a slight sensation of being ill at ease,
I mount the stairs and turn the handle of the door
And feel as if I had mounted on my hands and knees.

"And so you are going abroad; and when do you return?
But that's a useless question.
You hardly know when you are coming back,
You will find so much to learn."
My smile falls heavily among the bric-a-brac.

"Perhaps you can write to me."
My self-possession flares up for a second;
This is as I had reckoned.
"I have been wondering frequently of late
(But our beginnings never know our ends!)
Why we have not developed into friends."
I feel like one who smiles, and turning shall remark
Suddenly, his expression in a glass.
My self-possession gutters; we are really in the dark.

"For everybody said so, all our friends,
They all were sure our feelings would relate
So closely! I myself can hardly understand.
We must leave it now to fate.
You will write, at any rate.
Perhaps it is not too late.
I shall sit here, serving tea to friends."

And I must borrow every changing shape
To find expression . . . dance, dance
Like a dancing bear,
Cry like a parrot, chatter like an ape.
Let us take the air, in a tobacco trance . . .

Well! and what if she should die some afternoon,
Afternoon gray and smoky, evening yellow and rose;
Should die and leave me sitting pen in hand
With the smoke coming down above the house tops;
Doubtful, for quite a while
Not knowing what to feel or if I understand
Or whether wise or foolish, tardy or too soon. . . .

Would she not have the advantage, after all?
This music is successful with a "dying fall"
Now that we talk of dying —
And should I have the right to smile?

LA FIGLIA CHE PIANGE

O quam te memorem virgo . . .

STAND on the highest pavement of the stair —
Lean on a garden urn —
Weave, weave the sunlight in your hair —
Clasp your flowers to you with a pained surprise —
Fling them to the ground and turn
With a fugitive resentment in your eyes:
But weave, weave the sunlight in your hair.

So I would have had him leave,
So I would have had her stand and grieve,
So he would have left
As the soul leaves the body torn and bruised,
As the mind deserts the body it has used.
I should find
Some way incomparably light and deft,
Some way we both should understand,
Simple and faithless as a smile and shake of the hand.

She turned away, but with the autumn weather
Compelled my imagination many days,
Many days and many hours:
Her hair over her arms and her arms full of flowers.
And I wonder how they should have been together!
I should have lost a gesture and a pose.
Sometimes these cogitations still amaze
The troubled midnight and the noon's repose.

ROBINSON JEFFERS (1887–)

This poet is probably the one of greatest stature that the far West of our country can claim, and he seems in our own day to overshadow most of the other writers of his time. His are extraordinary, almost terrifying conceptions. In his writing he appears like a dæmonic god, beyond good and evil, trying to force by violence the fundamental secret from life. It is impossible, of course, to take the riddle of the universe by storm in this fashion; but in the effort Jeffers has struck out some magnificently sonorous poetry. In one of his poems which has not received the almost hysterical praise that greeted *Tamar* and *Roan Stallion*, namely in *The Tower Beyond Tragedy*, he created a Cassandra, in the midst of an almost intolerably convincing ancient atmosphere, who remains burned upon the mind as the veritable prophetess. His long poems are for mature minds, and even so, based as they are frequently upon the theme of incest, with all its horror and tragedy developed in detail, they require an heroic reader properly to appreciate Jeffers's nightmare imagination and relentless power. In shorter poems, such as the ones included here, however, the great energy and the deep meditation shewn forth in his long plangent lines can immediately be recognized.

This poet was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, took his A.B. at Occidental College, in Los Angeles, California, in 1905, and did post graduate work at the University of Zurich in Switzerland and at the University of Southern California. He married in 1913 and has two sons. His first small book, *Californians*, appeared in 1916, *Tamar and Other Poems* in 1924, *Roan Stallion, Tamar, and Other Poems* in 1925, *The Women at Point Sur* in 1927 and *Cawdor* in 1928. He has lived for some years at Carmel, California, where he built Tor House, his home, with his own hands. His publisher is Horace Liveright.

BOATS IN A FOG

Sports and gallantries, the stage, the arts, the antics of dancers,
The exuberant voices of music,
Have charm for children but lack nobility; it is bitter earnestness
That makes beauty; the mind
Knows, grown adult.
A sudden fog-drift muffled the ocean,
A throbbing of engines moved in it,
At length, a stone's throw out, between the rocks and the vapor,
One by one moved shadows
Out of the mystery, shadows, fishing-boats, trailing each other,
Following the cliff for guidance,
Holding a difficult path between the peril of the sea-fog
And the foam on the shore granite.
One by one, trailing their leader, six crept by me,
Out of the vapor and into it,
The throb of their engines subdued by the fog, patient and cautious,
Coasting all round the peninsula
Back to the buoys in Monterey harbor. A flight of pelicans
Is nothing lovelier to look at;
The flight of the planets is nothing nobler; all the arts lose virtue
Against the essential reality
Of creatures going about their business among the equally
Earnest elements of nature.

PELICANS

Four pelicans went over the house,
Sculled their worn oars over the courtyard: I saw that ungainliness

Magnifies the idea of strength.
A lifting gale of seagulls followed them; slim yachts of the element,
Natural growths of the sky, no wonder
Light wings to leave sea; but those grave weights toil, and are powerful,
And the wings torn with old storms remember
The cone that the oldest redwood dropped from, the tilting of continents,
The dinosaur's day, the lift of new sea lines.
The omnisecular spirit keeps the old with the new also.
Nothing at all has suffered erasure.
There is life not of our time. He calls ungainly bodies
As beautiful as the grace of horses.
He is weary of nothing; he watches airplanes; he watches pelicans.

From TAMAR

O SWIFTNESS of the swallow and strength
Of the stone shore, brave beauty of falcons,
Beauty of the blue heron that flies
Opposite the color of evening
From the Carmel River's reed-grown mouth
To her nest in the deep wood of the deer
Cliffs of peninsular granite engirdle,
O beauty of the fountains of the sun
I pray you enter a little chamber,
I have given you bodies, I have made you puppets,
I have made idols for God to enter
And tiny cells to hold your honey.
I have given you a dotard and an idiot
An old woman puffed with vanity, youth but botched with incest,
O blower of music through the crooked bugles,
You that make signs of sins and choose the lame for angels,

Enter and possess. Being light you have chosen the
dark lamps,
A hawk the sluggish bodies: therefore God you chose
Me; and therefore I have made you idols like these idols
To enter and possess.

NOON

The pure air trembles, O pitiless God,
The air aches with flame on these gaunt rocks
Over the flat sea's face, the forest
Shakes in gales of piercing light.

But the altars are behind and higher
Where the great hills raise naked heads,
Pale agonists in the reverberance
Of the pure air and the pitiless God.

On the domed skull of every hill
Who stand blazing with spread vans,
The arms uplifted, the eyes in ecstasy?

What wine has the God drunk, to sing
Violently in heaven, what wine his worshipers
Whose silence blazes? The light that is over
Light, the terror of noon, the eyes
That the eagles die at, have thrown down
Me and my pride, here I lie naked
In a hollow of the shadowless rocks,
Full of the God, having drunk fire.

AMY LOWELL (1874–1925)

Professor John Livingston Lowes of Harvard, author of that remarkable study of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Road to Xanadu*, has recently edited the *Selected Poems* (Houghton Mifflin Company) of the late Amy Lowell. That she came of one of the oldest and

most eminent New England families is well known. Her entire output comprised "more than six hundred and fifty titles, in eleven volumes." Professor Lowes has given us selections from all the volumes, which are: *A Dome of Many-Coloured Glass* (1912), *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed* (1914), *Men, Women and Ghosts* (1916), *Can Grande's Castle* (1918), *Pictures of the Floating World* (1919), *Legends* (1921), *Fir-Flower Tablets*, with Florence Ayscough (1921), *A Critical Fable* (1922), and three posthumous volumes, *What's O'Clock* (1925), *East Wind* (1926), and *Ballads for Sale* (1927). Beside all this poetry Miss Lowell wrote her monumental life of John Keats, in two volumes, and gave us two large books of criticism, *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry* and *Six French Poets*. Considering the fact that her first book appeared when she was thirty-eight, her poetic and critical output between that time and the date of her death is most remarkable, both in bulk and the vividly original quality of the work.

But for years before her first published poems she had been learning the craft of verse. At that, her earliest volume was but tentative. It indicated very little of what she was to mean in American poetry. When the "poetic revival" began in 1913, it started with Lindsay. It was not till a year after that, when Robert Frost's name was becoming known through his second volume, that Miss Lowell's *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed* startled us with its fresh energy. Then came Miss Lowell's introduction and championship of the Imagistes. She and John Gould Fletcher began to exploit what they called polyphonic prose. This was her most controversial period, up to the time of the War, and a day in which many diverse experiments in poetry were being made in America.

Meanwhile, outside of theory, Miss Lowell poured forth her own poetry in profusion. She orchestrated remarkable narratives, fantastic and historical, she wrote

realistic poems of New England, she delved in legend and myth, she explored the Oriental, she tossed off impressionistic pictures of the modern world, she articulated delicately lacquered lyrics, she coruscated, in fact, always with sharp technical brilliance. She said of herself in *A Critical Fable*,

> Armed to the teeth like an old Samurai,
> Juggling with jewels like the ancient genii,
> Hung all over with mouse-traps of metres, and cages
> Of bright-plumaged rhythms, with pages and pages
> Of colours slit up into streaming confetti . . .

But she has also bade us note that "despite her traducers, there's always a heart hid away in her poems for the seeking." In her best poems, such as *Patterns* and *Lilacs*, there most assuredly is. We remain still dazzled a little by the fireworks of the Independence Day she celebrated all by herself. But the future will winnow the truly impassioned work from the mere jugglery. And there is much to winnow. She remains one of the most extraordinary women poets who have written in English.

PATTERNS

I WALK down the garden paths,
And all the daffodils
Are blowing, and the bright blue squills.
I walk down the patterned garden-paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
With my powdered hair and jewelled fan,
I too am a rare
Pattern. As I wander down
The garden paths.

My dress is richly figured,
And the train

Makes a pink and silver stain
On the gravel, and the thrift
Of the borders.
Just a plate of current fashion,
Tripping by in high-heeled, ribboned shoes.
Not a softness anywhere about me,
Only whale-bone and brocade.
And I sink on a seat in the shade
Of a lime tree. For my passion
Wars against the stiff brocade.
The daffodils and squills
Flutter in the breeze
As they please.
And I weep;
For the lime tree is in blossom
And one small flower has dropped upon my bosom.

And the plashing of waterdrops
In the marble fountain
Comes down the garden paths.
The dripping never stops.
Underneath my stiffened gown
Is the softness of a woman bathing in a marble basin,
A basin in the midst of hedges grown
So thick, she cannot see her lover hiding,
But she guesses he is near,
And the sliding of the water
Seems the stroking of a dear
Hand upon her.
What is Summer in a fine brocaded gown!
I should like to see it lying in a heap upon the ground
All the pink and silver crumpled up on the ground.

I would be the pink and silver as I ran along the paths,
And he would stumble after,
Bewildered by my laughter.

I should see the sun flashing from his sword hilt and the
buckles on his shoes.
I would choose
To lead him in a maze along the patterned paths,
A bright and laughing maze for my heavy-booted lover,
Till he caught me in the shade,
And the buttons of his waistcoat bruised my body as he
clasped me,
Aching, melting, unafraid.
With the shadows of the leaves and the sundrops,
And the plopping of the waterdrops,
All about us in the open afternoon —
I am very like to swoon
With the weight of this brocade,
For the sun shifts through the shade.

Underneath the fallen blossom
In my bosom,
Is a letter I have hid.
It was brought to me this morning by a rider from the
Duke.
"Madam, we regret to inform you that Lord Hartwell
Died in action Thursday se'nnight."
As I read it in the white, morning sunlight,
The letters squirmed like snakes.
"Any answer, Madam?" said my footman.
"No," I told him.
"See that the messenger takes some refreshment.
No, no answer."

And I walked into the garden,
Up and down the patterned paths,
In my stiff, correct brocade.
The blue and yellow flowers stood up proudly in the sun,
Each one.
I stood upright too,

Held rigid to the pattern
By the stiffness of my gown.
Up and down I walked,
Up and down.

In a month he would have been my husband.
In a month, here, underneath this lime,
We would have broke the pattern;
He for me, and I for him,
He as Colonel, I as Lady,
On this shady seat.
He had a whim
That sunlight carried blessing.
And I answered, "It shall be as you have said."
Now he is dead.

In Summer and in Winter I shall walk
Up and down
The patterned garden paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown.
The squills and daffodils
Will give place to pillared roses, and to asters, and to snow.
I shall go
Up and down,
In my gown.
Gorgeously arrayed,
Boned and stayed.
And the softness of my body will be guarded from embrace
By each button, hook, and lace.
For the man who should loose me is dead,
Fighting with the Duke in Flanders,
In a pattern called a war.
Christ! What are patterns for?

THE CITY OF FALLING LEAVES

Leaves fall,
Brown leaves,
Yellow leaves streaked with brown.
They fall,
Flutter,
Fall again.
The brown leaves,
And the streaked yellow leaves,
Loosen on their branches
And drift slowly downwards.
One,
One, two, three,
One, two, five.
All Venice is a falling of autumn leaves,
Brown,
And yellow streaked with brown.

"That sonnet, Abate,
Beautiful,
I am quite exhausted by it.
Your phrases turn about my heart,
And stifle me to swooning.
Open the window, I beg.
Lord! What a strumming of fiddles and mandolins!
'Tis really a shame to stop indoors.
Call my maid, or I will make you lace me yourself.
Fie, how hot it is, not a breath of air!
See how straight the leaves are falling.
Marianna, I will have the yellow satin caught up with
silver fringe,
It peeps out delightfully from under a mantle.
Am I well painted to-day, *caro Abate mio?*
You will be proud of me at the Ridotto, hey?
Proud of being *cavalier servente* to such a lady?"
"Can you doubt it, *bellissima Contessa?*
A pinch more rouge on the right cheek,

And Venus herself shines less . . ."
"You bore me, Abate;
I vow I must change you!
A letter, Achmet?
Run and look out of the window, Abate.
I will read my letter in peace."

The little black slave with the yellow satin turban
Gazes at his mistress with strained eyes.
His yellow turban and black skin
Are gorgeous — barbaric.
The yellow satin dress with its silver flashings
Lies on a chair,
Beside a black mantle and a black mask.
Yellow and black,
Gorgeous — barbaric.
The lady reads her letter,
And the leaves drift slowly
Past the long windows.
"How silly you look, my dear Abate,
With that great brown leaf in your wig.
Pluck it off, I beg you,
Or I shall die of laughing."

A yellow wall,
Aflare in the sunlight,
Chequered with shadows,
Shadows of vine-leaves,
Shadows of masks.
Masks coming, printing themselves for an instant,
Then passing on,
More masks always replacing them.
Masks with tricorns and rapiers sticking out behind,
Pursuing masks with veils and high heels,
The sunlight shining under their insteps.
One,

One, two,
One, two, three —
There is a thronging of shadows on the hot wall,
Filigreed at the top with moving leaves.
Yellow sunlight and black shadows,
Yellow and black,
Gorgeous — barbaric.
Two masks stand together,
And the shadow of a leaf falls through them,
Marking the wall where they are not.
From hat-tip to shoulder-tip,
From elbow to sword-hilt,
The leaf falls.
The shadows mingle,
Blur together,
Slide along the wall and disappear.

Gold of mosaics and candles,
And night-blackness lurking in the ceiling beams.
Saint Mark's glitters with flames and reflections.
A cloak brushes aside,
And the yellow of satin
Licks out over the colored inlays of the pavement.
Under the gold crucifixes
There is a meeting of hands
Reaching from black mantles.
Sighing embraces, bold investigations,
Hide in confessionals,
Sheltered by the shuffling of feet.
Gorgeous — barbaric
In its mail of jewels and gold,
Saint Mark's looks down at the swarm of black masks;
And outside in the palace gardens brown leaves fall,
Flutter,
Fall.
Brown,
And yellow streaked with brown.

Blue-black the sky over Venice,
With a pricking of yellow stars.
There is no moon,
And the waves push darkly against the prow
Of the gondola,
Coming from Malamocco
And streaming toward Venice.
It is black under the gondola hood,
But the yellow of a satin dress
Glares out like the eye of a watching tiger.
Yellow compassed about with darkness,
Yellow and black,
Gorgeous — barbaric.
The boatman sings,
It is Tasso that he sings;
The lovers seek each other beneath their mantles,
And the gondola drifts over the lagoon, aslant to the coming dawn.
But at Malamocco in front,
In Venice behind,
Fall the leaves,
Brown,
And yellow streaked with brown.
They fall,
Flutter,
Fall.

THE RED LACQUER MUSIC-STAND

A MUSIC-STAND of crimson lacquer, long since brought
In some fast clipper-ship from China, quaintly wrought
With bossed and carven flowers and fruits in blackening gold,
The slender shaft all twined about and thickly scrolled
With vine leaves and young twisted tendrils, whirling, curling,
Flinging their new shoots over the four wings, and swirling

Out on the three wide feet in golden lumps and streams;
Petals and apples in high relief, and where the seams
Are worn with handling, through the polished crimson sheen,
Long streaks of black, the under lacquer, shine out clean.
Four desks, adjustable, to suit the heights of players
Sitting to viols or standing up to sing, four layers
Of music to serve every instrument, are there,
And on the apex a large flat-topped golden pear.
It burns in red and yellow, dusty, smouldering lights,
When the sun flares the old barn-chamber with its flights
And skips upon the crystal knobs of dim sideboards,
Legless and mouldy, and hops, glint to glint, on hoards
Of scythes, and spades, and dinner-horns, so the old tools
Are little candles throwing brightness round in pools.
With Oriental splendour, red and gold, the dust
Covering its flames like smoke and thinning as a gust
Of brighter sunshine makes the colours leap and range,
The strange old music-stand seems to strike out and change;
To stroke and tear the darkness with sharp golden claws;
To dart a forked, vermilion tongue from open jaws;
To puff out bitter smoke which chokes the sun; and fade
Back to a still, faint outline obliterate in shade.
Creeping up the ladder into the loft, the Boy
Stands watching, very still, prickly and hot with joy.
He sees the dusty sun-mote slit by streaks of red,
He sees it split and stream, and all about his head
Spikes and spears of gold are licking, pricking, flicking,
Scratching against the walls and furniture, and nicking
The darkness into sparks, chipping away the gloom.
The Boy's nose smarts with the pungence in the room.
The wind pushes an elm branch from before the door
And the sun widens out all along the floor,

Filling the barn-chamber with white straightforward light,
So not one blurred outline can tease the mind to fright.

"O All ye Works of the Lord, Bless ye the Lord;
Praise Him and Magnify Him for ever.
O let the Earth bless the Lord; Yea, let it Praise Him, and Magnify Him for ever.
O ye Mountains and Hills, Bless ye the Lord; Praise Him, and Magnify Him for ever.
O All ye Green Things upon the Earth, Bless ye the Lord; Praise Him, and Magnify Him for ever."

The Boy will praise his God on an altar builded fair,
Will heap it with the Works of the Lord. In the morning air,
Spices shall burn on it, and by their pale smoke curled,
Like shoots of all the Green Things, the God of this bright World
Shall see the Boy's desire to pay his debt of praise.
The Boy turns round about, seeking with careful gaze
An altar meet and worthy, but each table and chair
Has some defect, each piece is needing some repair
To perfect it; the chairs have broken legs and backs,
The tables are uneven, and every highboy lacks
A handle or a drawer, the desks are bruised and worn,
And even the wide sofa has its cane seat torn.
Only in the gloom far in the corner there
The lacquer music-stand is elegant and rare,
Clear and slim of line, with its four wings outspread,
The sound of old quartets, a tenuous, faint thread,
Hanging and floating over it, it stands supreme —
Black, and gold, and crimson, in one twisted scheme!

A candle on the bookcase feels a draught and wavers,
Stippling the white-washed walls with dancing shades and quavers.

A bed-post, grown colossal, jigs about the ceiling,
And shadows, strangely altered, stain the walls, revealing
Eagles, and rabbits, and weird faces pulled awry,
And hands which fetch and carry things incessantly.
Under the Eastern window, where the morning sun
Must touch it, stands the music-stand, and on each one
Of its broad platforms is a pyramid of stones,
And metals, and dried flowers, and pine and hemlock cones,
An oriole's nest with the four eggs neatly blown,
The rattle of a rattlesnake, and three large brown
Butternuts uncracked, six butterflies impaled
With a green luna moth, a snake-skin freshly scaled,
Some sunflower seeds, wampum, and a bloody-tooth shell,
A blue jay feather, all together piled pell-mell
The stand will hold no more. The Boy with humming head
Looks once again, blows out the light, and creeps to bed.

The Boy keeps solemn vigil, while outside the wind
Blows gustily and clear, and slaps against the blind.
He hardly tries to sleep, so sharp his ecstasy
It burns his soul to emptiness, and sets it free
For adoration only, for worship. Dedicate
His unsheathed soul is naked in its novitiate.
The hours strike below from the clock on the stair.
The Boy is a white flame suspiring in prayer.
Morning will bring the sun, the Golden Eye of Him
Whose splendour must be veiled by starry cherubim,
Whose Feet shimmer like crystal in the streets of Heaven.
Like an open rose the sun will stand up even,
Fronting the window-sill, and when the casement glows
Rose-red with the new-blown morning, then the fire which flows

From the sun will fall upon the altar and ignite
The spices, and his sacrifice will burn in perfumed light.
Over the music-stand the ghosts of sounds will swim,
Viols d'amore and *hautbois* accorded to a hymn.
The Boy will see the faintest breath of angels' wings
Fanning the smoke, and voices will flower through the strings.
He dares no farther vision, and with scalding eyes
Waits upon the daylight and his great emprise.

The cold, grey light of dawn was whitening the wall
When the Boy, fine-drawn by sleeplessness, started his ritual.
He washed, all shivering and pointed like a flame.
He threw the shutters open, and in the window-frame
The morning glimmered like a tarnished Venice glass.
He took his Chinese pastilles and put them in a mass
Upon the mantelpiece till he could seek a plate
Worthy to hold them burning. Alas! He had been late
In thinking of this need, and now he could not find
Platter or saucer rare enough to ease his mind.
The house was not astir, and he dared not go down
Into the barn-chamber, lest the door should be blown
And slam before the draught he made as he went out.
The light was growing yellower, and still he looked about.
A flash of almost crimson from the gilded pear
Upon the music-stand, startled him waiting there.
The sun would rise and he would meet it unprepared,
Labelled a fool in having missed what he had dared.
He ran across the room, took his pastilles and laid
Them on the flat-topped pear, most carefully displayed
To light with ease, then stood a little to one side,
Focussed a burning-glass and painstakingly tried
To hold it angled so the bunched and prismed rays

Should leap upon each other and spring into a blaze.
Sharp as a wheeling edge of disked, carnation flame,
Gem-hard and cutting upward, slowly the round sun came.
The arrowed fire caught the burning-glass and glanced,
Split to a multitude of pointed spears, and lanced,
A deeper, hotter flame, it took the incense pile
Which welcomed it and broke into a little smile
Of yellow flamelets, creeping, crackling, thrusting up,
A golden, red-slashed lily in a lacquer cup.

"O ye Fire and Heat, Bless ye the Lord; Praise Him and Magnify Him for ever.
O ye Winter and Summer, Bless ye the Lord; Praise Him and Magnify Him for ever.
O ye Nights and Days, Bless ye the Lord; Praise Him, and Magnify Him for ever.
O ye Lightnings and Clouds, Bless ye the Lord; Praise Him and Magnify Him for ever."

A moment so it hung, wide-curved, bright-petalled, seeming
A chalice foamed with sunrise. The Boy woke from his dreaming.
A spike of flame had caught the card of butterflies,
The oriole's nest took fire, soon all four galleries
Where he had spread his treasures were becoming one tongue
Of gleaming, brutal fire. The Boy instantly swung
His pitcher off the wash-stand and turned it upside down.
The flames drooped back and sizzled, and all his senses grown
Acute by fear, the Boy grabbed the quilt from his bed
And flung it over all, and then with aching head
He watched the early sunshine glint on the remains
Of his holy offering. The lacquer stand had stains

Ugly and charred all over, and where the golden pear
Had been, a deep, black hole gaped miserably. His dear
Treasures were puffs of ashes; only the stones were there,
Winking in the brightness.
The clock upon the stair
Struck five, and in the kitchen some one shook a grate.
The Boy began to dress, for it was getting late.

THE DINNER-PARTY

Fish

"So . . ." they said,
With their wine-glasses delicately poised,
Mocking at the thing they cannot understand.
"So . . ." they said again,
Amused and insolent.
The silver on the table glittered,
And the red wine in the glasses
Seemed the blood I had wasted
In a foolish cause.

Game

The gentleman with the grey-and-black whiskers
Sneered languidly over his quail.
Then my heart flew up and laboured,
And I burst from my own holding
And hurled myself forward.
With straight blows I beat upon him,
Furiously, with red-hot anger, I thrust against him.
But my weapon slithered over his polished surface,
And I recoiled upon myself,
Panting.

Drawing-Room

In a dress all softness and half-tones,
Indolent and half-reclined,

She lay upon a couch,
With the firelight reflected in her jewels.
But her eyes had no reflection,
They swam in a grey smoke,
The smoke of smouldering ashes,
The smoke of her cindered heart.

Coffee

They sat in a circle with their coffee-cups.
One dropped in a lump of sugar,
One stirred with a spoon.
I saw them as a circle of ghosts
Sipping blackness out of beautiful china,
And mildly protesting against my coarseness
In being alive.

Talk

They took dead men's souls
And pinned them on their breasts for ornament;
Their cuff-links and tiaras
Were gems dug from a grave;
They were ghouls battening on exhumed thoughts;
And I took a green liqueur from a servant
So that he might come near me
And give me the comfort of a living thing.

Eleven O'Clock

The front door was hard and heavy,
It shut behind me on the house of ghosts.
I flattened my feet on the pavement
To feel it solid under me;
I ran my hand along the railings
And shook them,
And pressed their pointed bars
Into my palms.
The hurt of it reassured me,

And I did it again and again
Until they were bruised.
When I woke in the night
I laughed to find them aching,
For only living flesh can suffer.

LILACS

Lilacs,
False blue,
White,
Purple,
Colour of lilac,
Your great puffs of flowers
Are everywhere in this my New England.
Among your heart-shaped leaves
Orange orioles hop like music-box birds and sing
Their little weak soft songs;
In the crooks of your branches
The bright eyes of song sparrows sitting on spotted eggs
Peer restlessly through the light and shadow
Of all Springs.
Lilacs in dooryards
Holding quiet conversations with an early moon;
Lilacs watching a deserted house
Settling sideways into the grass of an old road;
Lilacs, wind-beaten, staggering under a lopsided shock of bloom
Above a cellar dug into a hill.
You are everywhere.
You were everywhere.
You tapped the window when the preacher preached his sermon,
And ran along the road beside the boy going to school.
You stood by pasture-bars to give the cows good milking,

You persuaded the housewife that her dish pan was of silver
And her husband an image of pure gold.
You flaunted the fragrance of your blossoms
Through the wide doors of Custom Houses —
You, and sandal-wood, and tea,
Charging the noses of quill-driving clerks
When a ship was in from China.
You called to them: "Goose-quill men, goose-quill men,
May is a month for flitting,"
Until they writhed on their high stools
And wrote poetry on their letter-sheets behind the propped-up ledgers.
Paradoxical New England clerks,
Writing inventories in ledgers, reading the "Song of Solomon" at night,
So many verses before bed-time,
Because it was the Bible.
The dead fed you
Amid the slant stones of graveyards.
Pale ghosts who planted you
Came in the night-time
And let their thin hair blow through your clustered stems.
You are of the green sea,
And of the stone hills which reach a long distance.
You are of elm-shaded streets with little shops where they sell kites and marbles,
You are of great parks where everyone walks and nobody is at home.
You cover the blind sides of greenhouses
And lean over the top to say a hurry-word through the glass
To your friends, the grapes, inside.

Lilacs,
False blue,

White,
Purple,
Colour of lilac,
You have forgotten your Eastern origin,
The veiled women with eyes like panthers,
The swollen, aggressive turbans of jewelled Pashas.
Now you are a very decent flower,
A reticent flower,
A curiously clear-cut, candid flower,
Standing beside clean doorways,
Friendly to a house-cat and a pair of spectacles,
Making poetry out of a bit of moonlight
And a hundred or two sharp blossoms.

Maine knows you,
Has for years and years;
New Hampshire knows you,
And Massachusetts
And Vermont.
Cape Cod starts you along the beaches to Rhode Island;
Connecticut takes you from a river to the sea.
You are brighter than apples,
Sweeter than tulips,
You are the great flood of our souls
Bursting above the leaf-shapes of our hearts,
You are the smell of all Summers,
The love of wives and children,
The recollection of the gardens of little children,
You are State Houses and Charters
And the familiar treading of the foot to and fro on a road it knows.
May is lilac here in New England,
May is a thrush singing "Sun up!" on a tip-top ash-tree,
May is white clouds behind pine-trees
Puffed out and marching upon a blue sky.
May is green as no other,
May is much sun through small leaves,

May is soft earth,
And apple-blossoms,
And windows open to a South wind.
May is a full light wind of lilac
From Canada to Narragansett Bay.

Lilacs,
False blue,
White,
Purple,
Colour of lilac.
Heart-leaves of lilac all over New England,
Roots of lilac under all the soil of New England,
Lilac in me because I am New England,
Because my roots are in it,
Because my leaves are of it,
Because my flowers are for it,
Because it is my country
And I speak to it of itself
And sing of it with my own voice
Since certainly it is mine.

SARA TEASDALE (1884–)

Sara Teasdale's first volume, published in 1907, was *Sonnets to Duse*. Her second, *Helen of Troy*, followed four years later. This showed her mastery of lyrical blank verse embodying monologue. But it is as a writer of brief and perfect lyrics that she will remain to fame. Her *Rivers to the Sea* (Macmillan, 1915), *Love Songs* (Macmillan, 1917), *Flame and Shadow* (Macmillan, 1920), and later *Dark of the Moon* (Macmillan), present sufficient examples of her mastery of the spontaneous, lucid, and musical. As an avocation she has compiled several anthologies, one of love lyrics by women, one of poems for children.

She was born and educated in St. Louis, Missouri. She married in 1914 and has since lived in New York. The late Marguerite Wilkinson spoke of her "æsthetic doctrine of unflinching loyalty to the truth 'as it is felt'" and of the "ennobling clarity" in her work, because her lyrics "never veil or evade the hurt and harshness of life." Sara Teasdale's work is traditional in the highest sense, often she expresses a mood inevitably, always she writes with a profound sincerity. She believes that "the poem is written to free the poet from an emotional burden. Any poem not so written is only a piece of craftsmanship." She has also said, "The poet should try to give his poem the quiet swiftness of flame, so that the reader will feel and not think while he is reading. But the thinking will come afterwards." This is a quality she has successfully given to her own poems. She has made many of them "clear, ductile, a finished creation," working "at white heat of intellectual and emotional activity." I quote again her own words of advice to others. The consequence is, that though her range is restricted, within that range she is like to remain one of our most memorable lyrists.

I SHALL NOT CARE[1]

When I am dead and over me bright April
Shakes out her rain-drenched hair,
Though you should lean above me broken-hearted,
I shall not care.

I shall have peace, as leafy trees are peaceful
When rain bends down the bough;
And I shall be more silent and cold-hearted
Than you are now.

[1] From Sara Teasdale, *Rivers to the Sea*. Copyright, 1915, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

SUMMER NIGHT, RIVERSIDE[1]

In the wild soft summer darkness
How many and many a night we two together
Sat in the park and watched the Hudson
Wearing her lights like golden spangles
Glinting on black satin.
The rail along the curving pathway
Was low in a happy place to let us cross,
And down the hill a tree that dripped with bloom
Sheltered us
While your kisses and the flowers,
Falling, falling,
Tangled my hair. . . .

The frail white stars moved slowly over the sky.

And now, far off
In the fragrant darkness
The tree is tremulous again with bloom
For June comes back.
To-night what girl
When she goes home,
Dreamily before her mirror shakes from her hair
This year's blossoms, clinging in its coils?

THE ANSWER[1]

When I go back to earth
And all my joyous body
Puts off the red and white
That once had been so proud,
If men should pass above
With false and feeble pity,
My dust will find a voice
To answer them aloud:

[1] From Sara Teasdale, *Rivers to the Sea*. Copyright, 1915, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

"Be still, I am content,
Take back your poor compassion! —
Joy was a flame in me
Too steady to destroy.
Lithe as a bending reed
Loving the storm that sways her —
I found more joy in sorrow
Than you could find in joy."

I REMEMBERED[1]

THERE never was a mood of mine,
Gay or heart-broken, luminous or dull,
But you could ease me of its fever
And give it back to me more beautiful.

In many another soul I broke the bread,
And drank the wine and played the happy guest,
But I was lonely, I remembered you;
The heart belongs to him who knows it best.

"LET IT BE FORGOTTEN"[1]

LET it be forgotten, as a flower is forgotten,
Forgotten as a fire that once was singing gold.
Let it be forgotten for ever and ever —
Time is a kind friend, he will make us old.

If anyone asks, say it was forgotten
Long and long ago —
As a flower, as a fire, as a hushed footfall
In a long forgotten snow.

[1] From Sara Teasdale, *Flame and Shadow*. Copyright, 1920, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY (1892–)

In 1912 a certain poetic competition resulted in an anthology of the best poems submitted, entitled *The Lyric Year*. The first prize was won by Orrick Johns, since become a poet of note for a number of beautiful lyrics. In the volume appeared a poem that did *not* win the prize. It was *Renascence*, written by Edna St. Vincent Millay, then a girl of twenty. She had written her poem at the age of nineteen. It remains one of the most remarkable mystical poems in American literature.

To-day Miss Millay (in private life, Mrs. Eugen Boissevain) is probably the most popular woman poet in America. Her final triumph to date has been the book of that first entirely American grand opera, *The King's Henchman*, for which Deems Taylor wrote the music. Between *Renascence* (Harper) and *The King's Henchman* (Harper) appeared a number of volumes; of poetry, *A Few Figs from Thistles*, *Second April*, and *The Harp-Weaver and Other Poems*; of plays, *Two Slatterns and a King*, *The Lamp and the Bell*, and *Aria Da Capo*. Miss Millay's latest volume of poems is *The Buck in the Snow* (Harper). At one time she both served as playwright for and acted in the performances of the Provincetown Players. She is a most accomplished reader of her own poetry.

For a brief time it seemed as though Miss Millay might waste her extraordinary gifts in somewhat trivial comments upon love, though deftly turned. But with every succeeding volume she evinced increasing power, both as a most moving and finished lyrist and as the writer of superb sonnets. She also developed her powers of narrative, which are distinguished. At the present time, by the ardor and integrity of her work, she has achieved an enviable position. She commands both light irony and burning sincerity as she chooses. She lives now for the most part among high hills in upper

New York State on the Massachusetts border. She was Maine-born and her childhood was spent in New England. There is beautiful New England landscape in many of her poems. Her best work touches perfection.

RENASCENCE

All I could see from where I stood
Was three long mountains and a wood;
I turned and looked another way,
And saw three islands in a bay.
So with my eyes I traced the line
Of the horizon, thin and fine,
Straight around till I was come
Back to where I'd started from;
And all I saw from where I stood
Was three long mountains and a wood.
Over these things I could not see;
These were the things that bounded me;
And I could touch them with my hand,
Almost, I thought, from where I stand.
And all at once things seemed so small
My breath came short, and scarce at all.
But, sure, the sky is big, I said;
Miles and miles above my head;
So here upon my back I'll lie
And look my fill into the sky.
And so I looked, and, after all,
The sky was not so very tall.
The sky, I said, must somewhere stop,
And — sure enough! — I see the top!
The sky, I thought, is not so grand;
I 'most could touch it with my hand!
And, reaching up my hand to try,
I screamed to feel it touch the sky.

I screamed, and — lo! — Infinity
Came down and settled over me;

And, pressing of the Undefined
The definition on my mind,
Held up before my eyes a glass
Through which my shrinking sight did pass
Until it seemed I must behold
Immensity made manifold;
Whispered me a word whose sound
Deafened the air for worlds around,
And brought unmuffled to my ears
The gossiping of friendly spheres,
The creaking of the tented sky,
The ticking of Eternity.

I saw and heard, and knew at last
The How and Why of all things, past
And present, and forevermore.
The universe, cleft to the core,
Lay open to my probing sense
That, sick'ning, I would fain pluck thence
But could not, — nay! But needs must suck
At the great wound, and could not pluck
My lips away till I had drawn
All venom out. — Ah, fearful pawn!
For my omniscience I paid toll
In infinite remorse of soul.
All sin was of my sinning, all
Atoning mine, and mine the gall
Of all regret. Mine was the weight
Of every brooded wrong, the hate
That stood behind each envious thrust,
Mine every greed, mine every lust.
And all the while for every grief,
Each suffering, I craved relief
With individual desire, —
Craved all in vain! And felt fierce fire
About a thousand people crawl;
Perished with each, — then mourned for all!

A man was starving in Capri;
He moved his eyes and looked at me;
I felt his gaze, I heard his moan,
And knew his hunger as my own.
I saw at sea a great fog-bank
Between two ships that struck and sank;
A thousand screams the heavens smote;
And every scream tore through my throat.
No hurt I did not feel, no death
That was not mine; mine each last breath
That, crying, met an answering cry
From the compassion that was I.
All suffering mine, and mine its rod;
Mine, pity like the pity of God.
Ah, awful weight! Infinity
Pressed down upon the finite Me!
My anguished spirit, like a bird,
Beating against my lips I heard;
Yet lay the weight so close about
There was no room for it without.
And so beneath the weight lay I
And suffered death, but could not die.

Deep in the earth I rested now;
Cool is its hand upon the brow
And soft its breast beneath the head
Of one who is so gladly dead.
And all at once, and over all,
The pitying rain began to fall;
I lay and heard each pattering hoof
Upon my lowly, thatchèd roof,
And seemed to love the sound far more
Than ever I had done before.
For rain it hath a friendly sound
To one who's six feet underground;
And scarce the friendly voice or face:
A grave is such a quiet place.

The rain, I said, is kind to come
And speak to me in my new home.
I would I were alive again
To kiss the fingers of the rain,
To drink into my eyes the shine
Of every slanting silver line,
To catch the freshened, fragrant breeze
From drenched and dripping apple-trees.
For soon the shower will be done,
And then the broad face of the sun
Will laugh above the rain-soaked earth
Until the world with answering mirth
Shakes joyously, and each round drop
Rolls, twinkling, from its grass-blade top.
How can I bear it; buried here,
While overhead the sky grows clear
And blue again after the storm?
O, multi-colored, multiform,
Belovèd beauty over me,
That I shall never, never see
Again! Spring-silver, autumn-gold,
That I shall never more behold!
Sleeping your myriad magics through,
Close-sepulchred away from you!
O God, I cried, give me new birth,
And put me back upon the earth!
Upset each cloud's gigantic gourd
And let the heavy rain, down-poured
In one big torrent, set me free,
Washing my grave away from me!

I ceased; and, through the breathless hush
That answered me, the far-off rush
Of herald wings came whispering
Like music down the vibrant string
Of my ascending prayer, and — crash!
Before the wild wind's whistling lash

The startled storm-clouds reared on high
And plunged in terror down the sky,
And the big rain in one black wave
Fell from the sky and struck my grave.

I know not how such things can be
I only know there came to me
A fragrance such as never clings
To aught save happy living things;
A sound as of some joyous elf
Singing sweet songs to please himself,
And, through and over everything,
A sense of glad awakening.
The grass, a tip-toe at my ear,
Whispering to me I could hear;
I felt the rain's cool finger-tips
Brushed tenderly across my lips,
Laid gently on my sealèd sight,
And all at once the heavy night
Fell from my eyes and I could see, —
A drenched and dripping apple-tree,
A last long line of silver rain,
A sky grown clear and blue again.
And as I looked a quickening gust
Of wind blew up to me and thrust
Into my face a miracle
Of orchard-breath, and with the smell, —
I know not how such things can be! —
I breathed my soul back into me.
Ah! Up then from the ground sprang I
And hailed the earth with such a cry
As is not heard save from a man
Who has been dead, and lives again.
About the trees my arms I wound;
Like one gone mad I hugged the ground,
I raised my quivering arms on high;
I laughed and laughed into the sky,

Till at my throat a strangling sob
Caught fiercely, and a great heart-throb
Sent instant tears into my eyes;
O God, I cried, no dark disguise
Can e'er hereafter hide from me
Thy radiant identity!
Thou canst not move across the grass
But my quick eyes will see Thee pass,
Nor speak, however silently,
But my hushed voice will answer Thee.
I know the path that tells Thy way
Through the cool eve of every day;
God, I can push the grass apart
And lay my finger on Thy heart!

The world stands out on either side
No wider than the heart is wide;
Above the world is stretched the sky, —
No higher than the soul is high.
The heart can push the sea and land
Farther away on either hand;
The soul can split the sky in two,
And let the face of God shine through.
But East and West will pinch the heart
That cannot keep them pushed apart;
And he whose soul is flat — the sky
Will cave in on him by and by.

THE POET AND HIS BOOK

Down, you mongrel, Death!
Back into your kennel!
I have stolen breath
In a stalk of fennel!
You shall scratch and you shall whine
Many a night, and you shall worry
Many a bone, before you bury
One sweet bone of mine!

When shall I be dead?
When my flesh is withered,
And above my head
Yellow pollen gathered
All the empty afternoon?
When sweet lovers pause and wonder
Who am I that lie thereunder,
Hidden from the moon?

This my personal death? —
That my lungs be failing
To inhale the breath
Others are exhaling?
This my subtle spirit's end? —
Ah, when the thawed winter splashes
Over these chance dust and ashes,
Weep not me, my friend!

Me, by no means dead
In that hour, but surely
When this book, unread,
Rots to earth obscurely,
And no more to any breast,
Close against the clamorous swelling
Of the thing there is no telling,
Are these pages pressed!

When this book is mould,
And a book of many
Waiting to be sold
For a casual penny,
In a little open case,
In a street unclean and cluttered,
Where a heavy mud is spattered
From the passing drays,

Stranger, pause and look;
From the dust of ages

Lift this little book,
  Turn the tattered pages,
Read me, do not let me die!
  Search the fading letters, finding
  Steadfast in the broken binding
All that once was I!

When these veins are weeds,
  When these hollowed sockets
Watch the rooty seeds
  Bursting down like rockets,
And surmise the spring again,
  Or, remote in that black cupboard,
  Watch the pink worms writhing upward
At the smell of rain,

Boys and girls that lie
  Whispering in the hedges,
Do not let me die,
  Mix me in your pledges;
Boys and girls that slowly walk
  In the woods, and weep, and quarrel,
  Staring past the pink wild laurel,
Mix me with your talk.

Do not let me die!
  Farmers at your raking,
When the sun is high,
  While the hay is making,
When, along the stubble strewn,
  Withering on their stalks uneaten,
  Strawberries turn dark and sweeten
In the lapse of noon;

Shepherds on the hills,
  In the pastures, drowsing

To the tinkling bells
  Of the brown sheep browsing;
Sailors crying through the storm;
  Scholars at your study; hunters
  Lost amid the whirling winter's
Whiteness uniform;

Men that long for sleep;
  Men that wake and revel; —
If an old song leap
  To your senses' level
At such moments, may it be
  Sometimes, though a moment only,
  Some forgotten, quaint and homely
Vehicle of me!

Women at your toil,
  Women at your leisure
Till the kettle boil,
  Snatch of me your pleasure,
Where the broom-straw marks the leaf;
  Women quiet with your weeping
  Lest you wake a workman sleeping,
Mix me with your grief!

Boys and girls that steal
  From the shocking laughter
Of the old, to kneel
  By a dripping rafter
Under the discolored eaves,
  Out of trunks with hingeless covers
  Lifting tales of saint and lovers,
Travelers, goblins, thieves,

Suns that shine by night,
  Mountains made from valleys, —

Bear me to the light,
  Flat upon your bellies
By the webby window lie,
  Where the little flies are crawling, —
  Read me, margin me with scrawling,
Do not let me die!

Sexton, ply your trade!
  In a shower of gravel
Stamp upon your spade!
  Many a rose shall ravel,
Many a metal wreath shall rust
  In the rain, and I go singing
  Through the lots where you are flinging
Yellow clay on dust!

WEEDS

White with daisies and red with sorrel
  And empty, empty under the sky! —
Life is a quest and love a quarrel —
  Here is a place for me to lie.

Daisies spring from damnèd seeds,
  And this red fire that here I see
Is a worthless crop of crimson weeds,
  Cursed by farmers thriftily.

But here, unhated for an hour,
  The sorrel runs in ragged flame,
The daisy stands, a bastard flower,
  Like flowers that bear an honest name.

And here a while, where no wind brings
  The baying of a pack athirst,
May sleep the sleep of blessèd things
  The blood too bright, the brow accurst.

SONNET FROM *SECOND APRIL*

Cherish you then the hope I shall forget
At length, my lord, Pieria? — put away
For your so passing sake, this mouth of clay,
These mortal bones against my body set,
For all the puny fever and frail sweat
Of human love, — renounce for these, I say,
The Singing Mountain's memory, and betray
The silent lyre that hangs upon me yet?
Ah, but indeed, some day shall you awake,
Rather, from dreams of me, that at your side
So many nights, a lover and a bride,
But stern in my soul's chastity, have lain,
To walk the world forever for my sake,
And in each chamber find me gone again!

SONNET

Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare.
Let all who prate of Beauty hold their peace,
And lay them prone upon the earth and cease
To ponder on themselves, the while they stare
At nothing, intricately drawn nowhere
In shapes of shifting lineage; let geese
Gabble and hiss, but heroes seek release
From dusty bondage into luminous air.
O blinding hour, O holy, terrible day,
When first the shaft into his vision shone
Of light anatomized! Euclid alone
Has looked on Beauty bare. Fortunate they
Who, though once only and then but far away,
Have heard her massive sandal set on stone.

ELINOR WYLIE (1887–1928)

Elinor Wylie's first book of poems (with the exception of an earlier small and privately printed volume of

some thirteen years ago, now an excessive rarity) appeared in 1921. This was *Nets to Catch the Wind.* It attracted wide attention. Two years later, her second poetic volume, *Black Armour* (Doran), appeared in the same year with her first novel, *Jennifer Lorn* (Doran). In 1928 her third book of poems, *Trivial Breath* (Knopf), was published. Meanwhile she produced three more novels, *The Venetian Glass Nephew* (Doran, 1925), *The Orphan Angel* (Knopf, 1926), and *Mr. Hodge and Mr. Hazard* (Knopf, 1928). She died suddenly on December 16, 1928; her final volume of poems appearing through Knopf in April, 1929. Its title is *Angels and Earthly Creatures.*

Her poetry was, from the beginning, remarkable for unerring epithet, and for a passionate spiritual intensity controlled most strictly by a well-nigh flawless technique. Though several of her finest poems appeared in *Nets to Catch the Wind*, to mention *The Eagle and the Mole* and *Velvet Shoes*, *Black Armour* demonstrated a more remarkable versatility. Her latest volumes add yet other provinces to her Artemisian bow and spear. Her novels have been no less various, ranging from early eighteenth century fantasy to subtle psychological drama. In both poetry and prose her natural gift of exquisitely finished phrase is notable.

Elinor Wylie came of old American stock. A grandfather was Governor of Pennsylvania, her father was Solicitor General of the United States under Roosevelt. On both sides of her family she can claim distinguished progenitors. Her brother, Henry Martyn Hoyt, was an American painter of distinction. Her younger sister, Nancy Hoyt, is a brilliant novelist of the younger generation. Among the great poets of the past, Shelley was Elinor Wylie's supreme admiration, and she possessed one of the best libraries of Shelleyana in America. She was also by way of being an authority on the literature of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

She was a woman of extraordinary cultivation and a creative artist of the highest type. In only seven years, after a long interim following an early passionate interest in and practice of the art of poetry, she made lasting contributions to literature.

VELVET SHOES

Let us walk in the white snow
In a soundless space;
With footsteps quiet and slow,
At a tranquil pace,
Under veils of white lace.

I shall go shod in silk,
And you in wool,
White as a white cow's milk,
More beautiful
Than the breast of a gull.

We shall walk through the still town
In a windless peace;
We shall step upon white down,
Upon silver fleece,
Upon softer than these.

We shall walk in velvet shoes:
Wherever we go
Silence will fall like dews
On white silence below.
We shall walk in the snow.

THE EAGLE AND THE MOLE

Avoid the reeking herd,
Shun the polluted flock,

Live like that stoic bird
The eagle of the rock.

The huddled warmth of crowds
Begets and fosters hate;
He keeps, above the clouds,
His cliff inviolate.

When flocks are folded warm,
And herds to shelter run,
He sails above the storm,
He stares into the sun.

If in the eagle's track
Your sinews cannot leap,
Avoid the lathered pack,
Turn from the steaming sheep.

If you would keep your soul
From spotted sight or sound,
Live like the velvet mole;
Go burrow underground.

And there hold intercourse
With roots of trees and stones,
With rivers at their source,
And disembodied bones.

PEREGRINE

Liar and bragger,
He had no friend
Except a dagger
And a candle-end;
The one he read by;
The one scared cravens;

And he was fed by
The Prophet's ravens.
Such haughty creatures
Avoid the human;
They fondle nature's
Breast, not woman —
A she-wolf's puppies —
A wild-cat's pussy-fur:
Their stirrup-cup is
The pride of Lucifer.
A stick he carried,
Slept in a lean-to;
He'd never married,
And he didn't mean to.
He'd tried religion
And found it pleasant;
He relished a pigeon
Stewed with a pheasant
In an iron kettle;
He built stone ovens.
He'd never settle
In any province.
He made pantries
Of Vaux and Arden
And the village gentry's
Kitchen-garden.
Fruits within yards
Were his staples;
He drank whole vineyards
From Rome to Naples,
Then went to Brittany
For the cider.
He could sit any
Horse, a rider
Outstripping Cheiron's
Canter and gallop.
Pau's environs

The pubs of Salop,
Wells and Bath inns
Shared his pleasure
With taverns of Athens;
The Sultan's treasure
He'd seen in Turkey;
He'd known London
Bright and murky.
His bones were sunned on
Paris benches
Beset by sparrows;
Roman trenches,
Cave-men's barrows,
He liked, impartial;
He liked in Abbey.
His step was martial;
Spent and shabby
He wasn't broken;
A dozen lingoes
He must have spoken.
As a king goes
He went, not minding
That he lived seeking
And never finding.
He'd visit Peking
And then be gone soon
To the far Canaries.
He'd cross a monsoon
To chase vagaries.
He loved a city
And a street's alarums;
Parks were pretty
And so were bar-rooms
He loved fiddles;
He talked with rustics·
Life was riddles
And queer acrostics.

His sins were serried,
His virtues garish;
His corpse was buried
In a country parish.
Before he went hence —
God knows where —
He spoke this sentence
With a princely air:
"The noose draws tighter;
This is the end;
I'm a good fighter,
But a bad friend:
I've played the traitor
Over and over;
I'm a good hater,
But a bad lover."

MIRANDA'S SUPPER

(Virginia, 1866)

Between the solemn portico's
Column and column the lady goes;
Between the proud and painted stalks,
Plucked from Corinth, Miranda walks;
Pale, elegant, at point to vanish;
Her shoes are French, her shawl is Spanish;
Her silk in pure Manchurian rustles;
Three novices went blind at Brussels
To weave the enigma of her scarf;
Her lawns amazed the India Wharf
With webbed enchantment like a witch's
Before they flew in feather-stitches
To flounce her meanest petticoat.
A pair of cameos clasp her throat,
Wherein Psyche, pink and cream,
Slim-handed slants the candle-beam

On Cupid, swooning in carnelian;
Such trifles are antique Italian.

Miranda is a gentlewoman:
She met the invader as a Roman
Who scorns, above the screaming battle, a
Vercingetorix or Attila.
Fair-haired barbarian hordes disperse
Without the comment of a curse
From bitten lips like beads of coral;
She never made her anger oral.
She remained a marble memory
To the Cambridge Captain Amory.
She used him like a prince's legate,
But, oh, her eyes — her eyes were agate!
His mild and courteous Platonics
Shattered on flesh as firm as onyx;
She taught the boy to know his betters:
He saw the crown and heard the fetters.

Between the peony and rose,
Slim and sallow Miranda goes;
In light that's neither gold nor lunar,
This one later, and that one sooner;
Between the yellow and silver both,
Between the swallow and the moth,
Between the heavy walls of box.
Seven! Seven! cry all the clocks;
Five old clocks that chime in chorus,
One the gift of the Grand Duke Boris,
Malachite, with Peter in bronze
Setting his horse at the Persian guns;
The clock with a print of the Flying Castle;
The singing-bird clock that came from Basel;
Bonaparte's clock, with the bees worn shabby;
And the clock with the voice of an English Abbey.
Five aristocrats, gilt and argent,

Wound at the word of a raw top sergeant;
Wound by the paw of a brutal sentry,
To toll the obsequies of gentry,
In that Palladian temple standing
Empty over Peacock's Landing.

Between the box and the brier stalks
Pensively Miranda walks;
The mingled scene is cool and acrid;
Conventual evening is sacred.
Night invests its vistas slowly, as
Moonlight blooms on the magnolias
Whose cups contain the Holy Ghost;
Nothing is lost! Nothing is lost!

The evening is an ardent chapel,
A garden fenced with flowering apple;
Every flower enfolds a candle
Impregnate with the breath of sandal
And ambergris; a chamber arrased
With prayer, where peace lies unembarrassed;
Lies asleep, and does not move
Under the arching orchard grove.
Nothing is lost, nothing is murdered;
All is safe, and softly ordered.
Miranda kneels upon the grass;
The ruffles of her taffetas
Crackle and speak; the sound is crisper
Than her voice subdued to whisper.
The evening's vault is a cathedral;
Kneel and pray; forget the Federal!
Forget the foul receding fever;
Peace is immaculate as ever,
And seven thousand lovely acres
Once more Miranda's and her Maker's:
Edens relinquished one by one.

Miranda rises and goes on
To where upon a wooded crest a
Temple dedicate to Vesta —
Roman-Greek, a little bastard,
Pillars not of stone, but plastered —
Lends a look Hellenic-Latin
To a lawn like sea-green satin;
A structure, elegant and airy,
They call the thing a belvedere.
Why does Miranda stand and shiver?
Here is Phœbe, with her quiver
Furred by moss, and here's Apollo;
But the summer-house is hollow,
Hollow are the negroes' quarters,
And far away, across the parterres,
The mansion hangs on a hill's summit,
Hollowness resounding from it;
Streaming from it like a pennant;
Desolation is its tenant.
Harps and horns and windy whistles
Overflow the empty vessels.
Where are all the souls that filled them?
Who has killed them? Who has killed them?

For a moment's space the lady
Feels her pulse's beat unsteady,
Hammering and helter-skelter;
But her heart is safe in shelter,
Willow-vaulted, verdant-pastured,
Secure in silver mail envestured.

Miranda buckles on her courage.
Nevermore the beast shall forage,
Rooting with its bloody tushes
Among the rose and lilac bushes;
Trampling with devil-hooves of iron
The velvet gardens that environ,

Calm, austere, aloof, commanding,
The pillars and roofs of Peacock's Landing.

Miranda steps across the lawn
More precisely than a fawn
That shakes the dew from delicate ankles;
Nothing is wounded, nothing rankles,
Nothing is wicked, nothing whispers;
All is safe as a church at vespers,
On Christmas eve, when the bells cry Nowell!
Miranda takes her garden trowel;
She stoops, she kneels, she digs in the ground.
What is the thing that her hands have found?

Is it horror, or beautiful?
Is it a mandrake, is it a skull?
Is it a crucifix, is it a pistol?
The thing is a cup of Chinese Bristol.
Pure in color, correct in shape,
Bright as embroidered Canton crepe;
Mongol faces, demure and pale,
Small as Miranda's finger-nail;
Almond eyes, impertinent, tilted,
Flowers of April suavely melted;
This is a cup to hold infusions
Of caravan tea reserved for Russians
Or brewed for the throat of a thirsty Manchu;
This is a charming cup, I grant you;
Better by far than the willow patterns
That make a lady's soul a slattern's!
Behold Miranda now uncover
With lingering gestures of a lover
A grave that brims with twenty moons
Filling the bowls of the silver spoons.
Her mind grew duller, her mouth grew muter,
Each time she stirred her tea with pewter,

Or touched a knife with a black bone handle;
Now she is lighted like a candle.

She tastes the sugar and the spice in
Simple porridge served on Meissin;
Gros bleu de Sèvres, Italian faïence,
Hold starvation in abeyance;
Poverty begins to shine,
The crust of bread is steeped in wine;
All the miracle of Cana
May be performed by painted china,
And even the portent of the mass
Imprisoned in a crystal glass.
How many lovely shapes are here:
Brilliant and dark, opaque and clear;
Deep in earth, concealed thereunder;
Miranda dips her hands in wonder.
Here is Minton, smooth as cream;
Glass translucent as a dream
Of blue-green waves along the Lido,
Buried, as a bone by Fido!
Candle-sticks, divinely mated,
Fluted Sheffield, silver-plated,
Leap like lilies from the mould,
Clamoring for tongues of gold!

Miranda wakens from the dead;
Soon her table shall be spread
With alchemy of Belfast looms;
Tapers shall enchant the rooms
And make them populous as once;
Power shall flow from every sconce;
Like Delphic tripods they shall burn.
All the Peacocks shall return
As the sea's uncounted pebbles;
All the gray and golden rebels,
Fallen down like stars, to spangle

Earth, upon the Bloody Angle;
The devout and ivory ladies,
Back from heaven, back from Hades,
Back from other earthier scenes,
Baltimore and New Orleans;
Back from exile, back from durance,
Home again to proud assurance.

Here prepared within an upper
Chamber is Miranda's supper.
Now partake; it is her body;
And the carven cup is bloody
Where her fingers drew it forth
From mortality of earth.
Every broken crust and crumb
Savors of your coming home,
And the berries she has gathered
By divinity are fathered.
Eat the bread she is adoring,
Drink the water she is pouring;

Now approach, both man and ghost;
Nothing is lost! Nothing is lost!

HYMN TO EARTH

Farewell, incomparable element,
Whence man arose, where he shall not return;
And hail, imperfect urn
Of his last ashes, and his firstborn fruit;
Farewell, the long pursuit,
And all the adventures of his discontent;
The voyages which sent
His heart averse from home:
Metal of clay, permit him that he come

To thy slow-burning fire as to a hearth;
Accept him as a particle of earth.

Fire, being divided from the other three,
It lives removed, or secret at the core;
Most subtle of the four,
When air flies not, nor water flows,
It disembodied goes,
Being light, elixir of the first decree,
More volatile than he;
With strength and power to pass
Through space, where never his least atom was:
He has no part in it, save as his eyes
Have drawn its emanation from the skies.

A wingless creature heavier than air,
He is rejected of its quintessence;
Coming and going hence,
In the twin minutes of his birth and death,
He may inhale as breath,
As breath relinquish heaven's atmosphere,
Yet in it have no share,
Nor can survive therein
Where its outer edge is filtered pure and thin:
It doth but lend its crystal to his lungs
For his early crying, and his final songs.

The element of water has denied
Its child; it is no more his element;
It never will relent;
Its silver harvests are more sparsely given
Than the rewards of heaven,
And he shall drink cold comfort at its side:
The water is too wide:
The seamew and the gull
Feather a nest made soft and pitiful

Upon its foam; he has not any part
In the long swell of sorrow at its heart.

Hail and farewell, beloved element,
Whence he departed, and his parent once;
See where thy spirit runs
Which for so long hath had the moon to wife;
Shall this support his life
Until the arches of the waves be bent
And grow shallow and spent?
Wisely it cast him forth
With his dead weight of burdens nothing worth,
Leaving him, for the universal years,
A little seawater to make his tears.

Hail, element of earth, receive thy own,
And cherish, at thy charitable breast,
This man, this mongrel beast:
He plows the sand, and, at his hardest need,
He sows himself for seed;
He plows the furrow, and in this lies down
Before the corn is grown;
Between the apple bloom
And the ripe apple is sufficient room
In time, and matter, to consume his love
And make him parcel of a cypress grove.

Receive him as thy lover for an hour
Who will not weary, by a longer stay,
The kind embrace of clay;
Even within thine arms he is dispersed
To nothing, as at first;
The air flings downward from its four-quartered tower
Him whom the flames devour;
At the full tide, at the flood,
The sea is mingled with his salty blood:

The traveler dust, although the dust be vile,
Sleeps as thy lover for a little while.

LOLA RIDGE (1884–)

Though born in Ireland, Lola Ridge spent her early years in Australia. She first studied art, and then, when in her early twenties, came to the United States where she originally made her living by writing fiction. Later she organized an educational movement, wrote advertisements, illustrated, worked in a factory. In 1918 her long poem, *The Ghetto* (Huebsch) appeared in *The New Republic*, and in the same year it was brought out with other poems in her first volume. At a stride, she had "arrived." Her first book declared in a poem called *Dedication*,

I would be a torch unto your hand,
A lamp upon your forehead, Labor,
In the wild darkness before the Dawn
That I shall never see . . .

This standard she has never deserted. She is to-day the most notable radical poet in America. She writes with burning intensity in a fluid free verse that frequently casts up startling images. Her second book, *Sun-Up* (Huebsch), followed *The Ghetto*, in 1920. Then came *Red Flag* (Viking Press). A fiery spirit and a noble purpose burn in them all. We have said elsewhere, "She has a grip upon a great theme that most masculine writers could well envy." This is particularly borne out by a long poem upon the Crucifixion published in the fall of 1929 by Payson & Clarke and entitled *Firehead*. It may well mark her zenith.

For years Lola Ridge has been frail and ill and has known the remorselessness of poverty. Proud, highly courageous, infinitely sympathetic with and generous to

others, she has held her head high in the battle. She can write with terrible irony, with delicate sensitivity to beauty. She is one of the few practitioners of free verse who have made it an instrument of true inspiration. She has evolved a manner impressively peculiar to herself. Her brave singing will not be forgotten.

RÉVEILLE

Come forth, you workers!
Let the fires go cold —
Let the iron spill out, out of the troughs —
Let the iron run wild
Like a red bramble on the floors —
Leave the mill and the foundry and the mine
And the shrapnel lying on the wharves —
Leave the desk and the shuttle and the loom —
Come,
With your ashen lives,
Your lives like dust in your hands.

I call upon you, workers,
It is not yet light
But I beat upon your doors.
You say you await the Dawn
But I say you are the Dawn.
Come, in your irresistible unspent force
And make new light upon the mountains.

You have turned deaf ears to others —
Me you shall hear.
Out of the mouths of turbines,
Out of the turgid throats of engines,
Over the whistling steam,
You shall hear me shrilly piping.
Your mills I shall enter like the wind,

And blow upon your hearts,
Kindling a slow fire.

They think they have tamed you, workers —
Beaten you to a tool
To scoop up hot honor
Till it be cool —
But out of the passion of the red frontiers
A great flower trembles and burns and glows
And each of its petals is a people.

Come forth, you workers —
Clinging to your stable
And your wisp of warm straw —
Let the fires grow cold,
Let the iron spill out of the troughs,
Let the iron run wild
Like a red bramble on the floors. . . .

As our forefathers stood on the prairies
So let us stand in a ring,
Let us tear up their prisons like grass
And beat them to barricades —
Let us meet the fire of their guns
With a greater fire,
Till the birds shall fly to the mountains
For one safe bough.

From THE GHETTO

Lights go out . . .
And colors rush together,
Fusing and floating away.
Pale worn gold like the settings of old jewels . . .
Mauve, exquisite, tremulous, and luminous purples,
And burning spires in aureoles of light
Like shimmering auras.

They are covering up the pushcarts . . .
Now all have gone save an old man with mirrors —
Little oval mirrors like tiny pools.
He shuffles up a darkened street
And the moon burnishes his mirrors till they shine like
phosphorus. . . .
The moon like a skull,
Staring out of eyeless sockets at the old men trundling
home the pushcarts.
. . . . . .

A sallow dawn is in the sky
As I enter my little green room.
Without, the frail moon,
Worn to a silvery tissue,
Throws a faint glamour on the roofs,
And down the shadowy spires
Lights tip-toe out . . .
Softly as when lovers close street doors.

Out of the Battery
A little wind
Stirs idly — as an arm
Trails over a boat's side in dalliance —
Rippling the smooth dead surface of the heat,
And Hester street,
Like a forlorn woman over-borne
By many babies at her teats,
Turns on her trampled bed to meet the day.

SONS OF BELIAL

I

We are old,
Old as song.
Before Rome was
Or Cyrene,

Mad nights knew us
And old men's wives.
We knew who spilled the sacred oil
For young-gold harlots of the town. . . .
We knew where the peacocks went
And the white doe for sacrifice.

II

We were the sons of Belial.
One black night
Centuries ago
We beat at a door
In Gilead. . . .
We took the Levite's concubine
We plucked her hands from off the door . . .
We choked the cry into her throat
And stuck the stars among her hair. . . .
We glimpsed the madly swaying stars
Between the rhythms of her hair. . . .
And all our mute and separate strings
Swelled in a raging symphony. . . .
All that night our blood sang pæans
Till dawn fell like a wounded swan
Upon the fields of Gilead.

III

We are old. . . .
Old as song. . . .
We are dumb song.
(*Epics tingled*
In our blood
When we haled Hypatia
Over the stones
In Alexandria.)
Could we loose
The wild rhythms clinched in us. . . .

March in bands of troubadours. . . .
We would be of gentle mood.
When Christ healed us
Who were dumb —
When he freed our shut-in song —
We strewed green palms
At his pale feet. . . .
We sang hosannas
In Jerusalem.
And all our fumbling voices blent
In a brief white harmony.
(*But a mightier song*
Was in us pent
When we nailed Christ
To a four-armed tree.)

IV

We are young.
When we rise up with singing roots,
(*Warm rains washing*
Gutters of Berlin
Where we stamped Rosa . . . Luxemburg
On a night in spring.)
Rhythms skurry in our blood.
Little nimble rats of song
In our feet run crazily
And all is dust . . . we trample . . . on.
Mad nights when we make ritual
(*Feet running before the sleuth-light . . .*
And the smell of burnt flesh
By a flame-ringed hut
In Missouri,
Sweet as on Rome's pyre. . . .)
We make ropes do rigadoons
With copper feet that jig on air. . . .
We are the Mob. . . .

Old as song. . . .
Tyre knew us
And Israel.

A JOY IS IN THE MORNING VEILED

A joy is in the morning veiled . . .
a light within a light . . .
now on the brick wall that burns to rose
and all but pulsates, now a gleam
as of a white soaring bird
that eyes strain for and lose sight . . .
now in a nimbus as of steam,
surrounding a clear flame,
invisible.

A joy floats in the morning, veiled . . .
a light within a light
that draws the trembling spirit like a seed . . .
a splendour in the morning, imminent,
a stirring at the quick
of some white palpitating core
of such intensity as might
burn up Manhattan like a reed.

ELECTROCUTION

He shudders . . . feeling on the shaven spot
The probing wind, that stabs him to a thought
Of storm-drenched fields in a white foam of light,
And roads of his hill-town that leap to sight
Like threads of tortured silver . . . while the guards —
Monstrous deft dolls that move as on a string,
In wonted haste to finish with this thing,
Turn faces blanker than asphalted yards.

They heard the shriek that tore out of its sheath
But as a feeble moan . . . yet dared not breathe,

Who stared there at him, arching — like a tree
When the winds wrench it and the earth holds tight —
Whose soul, expanding in white agony,
Had fused in flaming circuit with the night.

"H. D." (1886–)

Living abroad, in London first, and latterly in Switzerland, since 1911, with the exception of a visit to America in 1920, when she lived in California for a year, Hilda Doolittle seems to us almost more English than American, although she was born in Pennsylvania, spent her youth near Philadelphia, and finished her education at Bryn Mawr. In London she joined the group Ezra Pound had organized as Imagists and whose work he had printed in a volume in 1914. Having organized, Pound withdrew, and the remaining three Imagistic Americans were the diverse Amy Lowell, John Gould Fletcher, and "H. D." Miss Doolittle's work always appeared, in certain periodicals of the time and in Miss Lowell's later Imagist anthologies, under her chosen pen-name. It was not till 1916 that her first book, *Sea Garden*, was published. *Hymen*, her second book, followed five years later. Three years after that came *Heliodora and Other Poems*, and now most recently we have had her *Collected Poems* (Horace Liveright), which include her translations from the Greek.

"H. D." has always followed Greek models. At first, her work appears to have the chill of marble. But any thorough attention to her poems will make plain the passionate intensity, the human feeling, that underruns the archaic strictness of her method. She abhors both vagueness and sentimentality. She strikes fire from the flint. The late Marguerite Wilkinson has called her "perhaps the only pagan poet-ritualist now writing." She has a remarkable gift for making ancient landscape vivid to us through all our senses. Search out her

poem *Sea Gods* for proof. She seems to have been born out of her century; but her imagination has dwelt so long and with such intensity in the Hellenic atmosphere, she endows the lost gods and the vanished race with new life. She is a poet of rare gifts as well as an accurate scholar and occupies a unique place in contemporary American poetry.

OREAD

Whirl up, sea —
Whirl your pointed pines.
Splash your great pines
On our rocks.
Hurl your green over us —
Cover us with your pools of fir.

LETHE

Nor skin nor hide nor fleece
Shall cover you,
Nor curtain of crimson nor fine
Shelter of cedar-wood be over you,
Nor the fir-tree
Nor the pine.

Nor sight of whin nor gorse
Nor river-yew,
Nor fragrance of flowering bush,
Nor wailing of reed-bird to waken you.
Nor of linnet
Nor of thrush.

Nor word nor touch nor sight
Of lover, you
Shall long through the night but for this:

The roll of the full tide to cover you
Without question,
Without kiss.

LEDA

WHERE the slow river
meets the tide,
a red swan lifts red wings
and darker beak,
and underneath the purple down
of his soft breast
uncurls his coral feet.

Through the deep purple
of the dying heat
of sun and mist,
the level ray of sun-beam
has caressed
the lily with dark breast,
and flecked with richer gold
its golden crest.

Where the slow lifting
of the tide,
floats into the river
and slowly drifts
among the reeds,
and lifts the yellow flags,
he floats
where tide and river meet.

Ah kingly kiss —
no more regret
nor old deep memories
to mar the bliss;
where the low sedge is thick,

the gold day-lily
outspreads and rests
beneath soft fluttering
of red swan wings
and the warm quivering
of the red swan's breast.

SECOND SONG *from CYPRUS*

WHERE is the nightingale,
in what myrrh-wood and dim?
ah, let the night come black,
for we would conjure back
all that enchanted him,
all that enchanted him.

Where is the bird of fire?
in what packed hedge of rose?
in what roofed ledge of flower?
no other creature knows
what magic lurks within,
what magic lurks within.

Bird, bird, bird, bird, we cry,
hear, pity us in pain;
hearts break in the sunlight,
hearts break in daylight rain,
only night heals again,
only night heals again.

LÉONIE ADAMS (1899–)

Those Not Elect, Miss Adams's first volume of poems, was published by McBride only three years ago. Since that time her later work has frequently appeared in the pages of *The New Republic*. Still in her late twenties,

the unusual quality of her poetry has raised her to the first rank among the women poets of America.

She was born in Brooklyn and graduated from Barnard College at Columbia in 1922. She wrote for several years without desiring or caring for publication. Much of her work is metaphysical in the sense that she has been influenced by the metaphysical poets of an elder day, but not to the blurring of her own individuality, her native idiosyncratic felicity of phrase. Hers is work of sensitive intricacy, of a still magic. At its best it is of rare beauty.

COUNTRY SUMMER

Now the rich cherry, whose sleek wood,
And top with silver petals traced,
Like a strict box its gems encased,
Has split from out that cunning lid,
All in an innocent green round
Those melting rubies which it hid.
With moss ripe-strawberry encrusted,
So birds get half, and minds lapse merry
To taste that deep-red lark's-bite berry,
And blackcap bloom is yellow-dusted.

The wren that thieved it in the eaves,
A trailer of the rose could catch
To her poor droopy sloven thatch,
And side by side with the wren's brood —
O lovely time of beggars' luck —
Opens the quaint and hairy bud;
And full and golden is the yield
Of cows that never have to house,
But all night nibble under boughs,
Or cool their sides in the moist field.

Into the rooms flow meadow airs,
The warm farm-baking smell's blown round;

Inside and out, and sky and ground,
Are much the same; the wishing star,
Hesperus, kind and early-born,
Is risen only finger-far.
All stars stand close in summer air,
And tremble, and look mild as amber.
When wicks are lighted in the chamber,
You might say, stars were settling there.

Now straightening from the flowery hay,
Down the still light the mowers look,
Or turn, because their dreaming shook,
And they waked half to other days,
When left alone in the yellow stubble,
The rusty-coated mare would graze.
Yet thick the lazy dreams are born,
Another thought can come to mind,
But like the shivering of the wind,
Morning and evening in the corn.

SAID OF THE EARTH AND THE MOON

New moony light
The dews drink over the black turf,
And earth, at bottom darkness lying,
Looks up on heaven and heavenly night;
Stares on the glittering lady climbing
Her airy arch away,
Till a cold humour of her breast
Infests her clay.

The huntress of the air lets fly,
The beast of earth receives her arrow,
And by those silver arrows maimed,
The bones course with watery marrow.

Now fever-bright the dead moon goes,
The mistress to the sun, that crept
From starveling death, and on his breath
Has fed her lustre while her lover slept.

For the swart earth has breeded of her loves,
But the moon spent upon her withered shell;
And though the moon is barren, she's not cursed,
Nor the fruit unholy to be beautiful.

The stars were scattered at the edge of even,
Clouds may not snare her glittering heels to-night,
And still the amorous gold sun is sleeping,
The earth lies moored, she mounts the brink of heaven.

PART III

WILLIAM ELLERY LEONARD (1876–)

If you wish to know the story of William Ellery Leonard's lifelong neurosis, you should read his autobiographical volume, *The Locomotive God*. The great tragic experience of his life is in *Two Lives* (Viking Press, 1925), a powerfully poignant narrative couched in sonnets. The sonnets taken individually are not great, but the cumulative effect of the poem as a whole is as impressive as any poem founded on fact ever written in America. Leonard is a rebel and has written courageous poetry. His *The Lynching Bee* is striking and terrible. He was born in New Jersey and received a post-graduate degree from Harvard in 1899. Like Wheelock, he studied abroad thereafter — at Göttingen and at Bonn. Since 1906 he has been Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin.

The Vaunt of Man was his first volume of poems, published in 1912, traditional in technique, revolutionary in spirit. *The Lynching Bee and Other Poems* appeared in 1920. Four years later came *Tutankhamen and After*. This last contains the remarkable post-war poem, *The Quaker Meeting-House*, but *The Lynching Bee* is, as a whole, the better book of the two. Leonard has also translated from the Greek and Latin and paraphrased Æsop's fables.

William Ellery Leonard is usually propagandist in his briefer poems, but his passionate sincerity gives them singular force. Occasionally the message is more to him than the pondered presentation of the message and he descends almost to doggerel. This is, however, not often; and he always has spirited and independent

things to say. Life has scarred him deeply. His sympathy is profound for all who suffer.

TOM MOONEY

I

Tom Mooney sits behind a grating,
Beside a corridor. (He's waiting.)
Long since he picked or peeled or bit away
The last white callous from his palms, they say.
The crick is gone from out his back;
And all the grease and grime
Gone from each finger-nail and every knuckle-crack.
(And that took time.)

II

Tom Mooney breathes behind a grating,
Beside the corridor. (He's waiting.)
The Gold-men from ten cities hear in sleep
Tom Mooney breathing — for he breathes so deep.
The Gold-men from ten cities rise from bed
To make a brass crown for Tom Mooney's head;
They gather round great oaken desks — each twists
Two copper bracelets for Tom Mooney's wrists.
And down sky-scraper basements (all their own)
They forge the spikes for his galvanic throne.
The Gold-men love the jests of old Misrule —
At ease at last, they'll laugh their fill;
They'll deck Tom Mooney king, they will —
King over knave and fool.
And from enameled doors of rearward office-vaults,
Lettered in gold with names that never crock,
They will draw back the triple iron bolts,
Then scatter from the ridges of their roofs
The affidavits of their paper-proofs
Of pallid Tomfool's low and lubber stock.

III

Tom Mooney thinks behind a grating,
Beside a corridor. (He's waiting.)
(Tom Mooney free was but a laboring man;
Tom Mooney jailed's the Thinker of Rodin.)
The workers in ten nations now have caught
The roll and rhythm of Tom Mooney's thought —
By that earth-girdling S. O. S.,
The subtle and immortal wireless
Of Man's strong justice in distress.
The Workers in ten nations think and plan:
The pick-ax little Naples man,
The rice-swamp coolies in Japan
(No longer mere embroidery on a screen),
The crowds that swarm from factory gates,
At yellow dusks with all their hates,
In Ireland, Austria, Argentine,
In England, France, and Russia far
(That slew a Czar), —
Or where the Teutons lately rent
The Iron Cross (on finding what it meant);
At yellow dusks with all their hates
From fiery shops or gas-choked mines,
From round-house, mill, or lumber-pines,
In the broad belt of these United States.
The Workers, like the Gold-men, plan and wake, —
What bodes their waking?
The Workers, like the Gold-men, something make, —
What are they making? —
The Gold-men answer often —
"They make Tom Mooney's coffin."

IV

Tom Mooney talks behind a grating,
Beside a corridor. (He's waiting.)
You cannot get quite near
Against the bars to lay your ear;

You find the light too dim
To spell the lips of him.
But, like a beast's within a zoo
(That was of old a god to savage clans),
His body shakes at you —
A beast's, a god's, a man's!
And from its ponderous, ancient rhythmic shaking
Ye'll guess what 'tis the workers now are making.
They make for times to come
From times of old — how old! —
From sweat, from blood, from hunger, and from tears,
From scraps of hope (conserved through bitter years
Despite the might and mockery of gold),
They make, these haggard men with shawl-wives dumb
And pinched-faced children cold,
Descendants of the oldest, earth-born stock,
Gnarled brothers of the surf, the ice, the fire, the rock,
Gray wolf and gaunt storm-bird.
They make a bomb more fierce than dynamite, —
They weld a Word.
And on the awful night
The Gold-men set Tom Mooney grinning
(If such an hour shall be in truth's despite)
They'll loose the places of much underpinning
In more than ten big cities, left and right.

ARTHUR DAVISON FICKE (1883–)

Arthur Ficke's preface to the 1926 edition of his *Selected Poems* (Doran) is a brief essay on *The Nature of Poetry*. In this he says: "Time has proved that the function of poetry is not to impart messages, but to explore the depths of emotion. The poet is never a teacher, but always a learner. His poem is a venture at perilous discovery, not under any circumstances a complacent undertaking to instruct the world." He believes that "nothing can refute the autonomy of the

lyric cry" because "The poets deal with the emotions; and the emotions rule everything. The heart is lord over all our cerebral wisdoms." This is a point of view worth regarding. It is true, as Ficke says that "the collective judgment of mankind" is often "a corrupt oracle" and that the intuitions of the heart which the poet sets before us are usually "a guide more trustworthy than all the parliaments of man."

Ficke is a highly cultivated man and a fine craftsman. He is best at the sonnet and the brief lyric. He has written a number of sonnet-sequences, the best of which is *Sonnets of a Portrait Painter*. His most sustained lyrical flight is *An April Elegy*. He is an Iowan by birth, graduated from Harvard in 1904, was admitted to the bar in 1908 and practiced law in the Middle West for about ten years. During the War he went overseas and became a Major in our Army. Since the War he has devoted himself exclusively to literature, and illness recently took him to New Mexico for several years where he lived in Santa Fé, from which he has recently returned.

During the poetic "renaissance," before America entered the war Ficke and Witter Bynner collaborated in the Spectrist hoax, a take-off on the new poetry. His books of poetry number ten. He has also written *Mr. Faust*, a play which was given successful production. As an expert upon Japanese prints he has written *Twelve Japanese Painters* (1913) and *Chats on Japanese Prints* (1915). A new volume of poetry by him is to appear as this note is written. Ficke's manner is gravely traditional, but he is by turns both the romantic and the rationalist, and always deeply subjective.

LONG AND LOVELY

Long and lovely, cool and white,
She lay beside me all the night.

Long and lovely, hushed and warm,
She touched me, thigh and breast and arm.

My body was one tremulous sense
Of her slight body's eloquence.

I was a drowned man, in the sea
Of her immaculate melody.

Drifting slowly down to sleep,
I longed to laugh, I feared to weep.

While hushed and lovely, cool and white,
She lay beside me all the night.

FANTASY FOR A CHARMING FRIEND

This goblet is a little loving-cup.
I raise it to my lips, and where you kissed
There lurks a certain sting that I have missed
In nectars more laboriously put up.
Your hair is hissing startled golden sounds
Through gratings of your little cage of lies;
And I can read a promise in your eyes
As sunset fades across the coffee-grounds.
Yet vain the hope we shall collaborate
In this or that disorder, bad or worse;
For I but chase off flies with bits of verse,
While you resolve the curls of Time and Fate;
And though our path be circular or straight,
This is no Roman chariot, but a hearse.

You have, my love, mosquitoes in your eyes
That circle in a little cloud, and sting,
And make me mad for almost anything
That could provide indelicate surprise.
Here with the rag-bag of our destinies

Emptied upon the floor, in a small ring
We, sorting over pieces, softly sing;
And I sing music, love; and you sing lies.
O pampered darling on whose velvet knees
The Sphinx of carven ages lolls and purrs!
There shall be other æons after these
In which to whet those silver claws of hers.
Wherefore I do entreat you, an you please,
Not to disturb my whited sepulchers.

You are a minx, a marten, and a mouse:
Come in, for my menagerie is wide.
Though bed, or tree-nest, or wainscoting-house
You shall prefer, all lodgings I provide.
For I am very fearful you may choose
By stealth a secret triumph here to win;
So I make choice of what is least to lose,
And lest you draw me out, I draw you in.
Enter! and in these old halls take your rest
Or whatsoever else you choose to take.
You have a curious brain, a delicate breast —
I make you welcome here for either's sake.
Play on, my love, at being little sphinx,
While I set chairs for marten, mouse, and minx.

Yet, lest with too much taunting of the gods
They should grow angry that I torture so
Their beauty into devious periods,
I will speak truth one moment ere I go.
I will confess that loveliness has stirred
Like a long music through me many a time
When all my courts and fountains with some word
Of yours were echoing in a silver rhyme —
That when the apes and peacocks all have done
With prancing in the portico, there shall be
A recollection, safe from sun to sun,
Within the dark high-vaulted halls of me —

And one tall window, dearer than the rest,
Whose prospect is your open golden west.

LOREINE: A HORSE

She lifted up her head
With the proud incredible poise
Of beauty recovered
From the Mycenæan tombs.

She opened her nostrils
With the wild arrogance
Of life that knows nothing
Except that it is life.

Her slender legs
Quivered above the soft grass.
Her hard hooves
Danced among the dandelions.

Her great dark eyes
Saw all that could be seen.
Her large lips
Plucked at my coat-sleeve.

All the wisdom of the prophets
Vanished into laughter
As Loreine lifted her small foot
And pawed the air.

All the learning of the sages
Turned to ribald rubrics
When that proud head
Looked at a passing cloud.

And so, amid this godless
God-hungry generation,

Let us, my friends, take Loreine
And worship her.

She would demand nothing,
Nor would she utter thunders.
She is living, and real,
And she is beautiful.

JAMES OPPENHEIM (1882–)

Oppenheim's books of poems number eight in all. He has also published four novels, several collections of short stories, two poetic dramas. The best volume of his poetry to procure is *The Sea* (Knopf, 1923). This is a gathering together of the finest work in previous volumes and shows his range and poetic progress.

At the age of twenty-seven Oppenheim first obtained literary recognition for his first volume of poems, *Monday Morning and Other Poems*, and his first volume of stories, *Doctor Rast.* A number of the poems and stories had previously appeared in periodicals. In the poetry the influence of Whitman was obvious but the evidence of original power no less so. The stories were drawn from Oppenheim's experiences in settlement work on the lower East Side, which he pursued for three years after three years at Columbia University.

In 1914, Oppenheim's *Songs for the New Age* (Century) appeared, strong, vital pronouncements, combining Old Testament Rhapsody with modern rationalistic thinking. After that Oppenheim began to develop an increasing interest in psychoanalysis, of which he finally became a practitioner. His later work is much influenced by this new science. He believes not in God evolving Man but rather in Man evolving godhead. He probes deeply into the dark confusion of Man's spirit in its struggle for the light. He feels strongly and

deeply his Hebrew heritage of psalmody and prophecy. In his most inspired moments he controls a sonorous organ music; and he is given to flashes of spiritual insight clothed in striking metaphor. From the influences of the Old Testament, of Whitman, of psychoanalysis, he has evolved his own idiom, though in some of his earlier work it is cluttered and clouded. He is one of our evangelists of song, though a man with a well-rounded experience of the world and a keen student of modern thought.

TASTING THE EARTH

In a dark hour, tasting the Earth.

As I lay on my couch in the muffled night, and the rain
lashed my window,
And my forsaken heart would give me no rest, no pause
and no peace,
Though I turned my face far from the wailing of my
bereavement. . . .
Then I said: I will eat of this sorrow to its last shred,
I will take it unto me utterly,
I will see if I be not strong enough to contain it. . . .
What do I fear? Discomfort?
How can it hurt me, this bitterness?

The miracle, then!
Turning toward it, and giving up to it,
I found it deeper than my own self. . . .
O dark great mother-globe so close beneath me . . .
It was she with her inexhaustible grief,
Ages of blood-drenched jungles, and the smoking of
craters, and the roar of tempests,
And moan of the forsaken seas,
It was she with the hills beginning to walk in the shapes
of the dark-hearted animals,

It was she risen, dashing away tears and praying to
dumb skies, in the pomp-crumbling tragedy of
man . . .
It was she, container of all griefs, and the buried dust of
broken hearts,
Cry of the christs and the lovers and the child-stripped
mothers,
And ambition gone down to defeat, and the battle over-
borne,
And the dreams that have no waking. . . .

My heart became her ancient heart:
On the food of the strong I fed, on dark strange life
itself:
Wisdom-giving and sombre with the unremitting love
of ages. . . .

There was dank soil in my mouth,
And bitter sea on my lips,
In a dark hour, tasting the Earth.

HEBREWS

(*To be chanted thunderously*)

I come of a mighty race . . . I come of a very mighty
race . . .
Adam was a mighty man, and Noah a captain of the
moving waters,
Moses was a stern and splendid king, yea, so was
Moses . . .
Give me more songs like David's to shake my throat to
the pit of the belly,
And let me roll in the Isaiah thunder . . .

Ho! the mightiest of our young men was born under a
star in the midwinter . . .

His name is written on the sun and it is frosted on the moon . . .
Earth breathes him like an eternal spring; he is a second sky over the Earth.

Mighty race! mighty race! — my flesh, my flesh
Is a cup of song,
Is a well in Asia . . .
I go about with a dark heart where the Ages sit in a divine thunder . . .
My blood is cymbal-clashed and the anklets of the dancers tinkle there . . .
Harp and psaltery, harp and psaltery make drunk my spirit . . .

I am of the terrible people, I am of the strange Hebrews . . .
Amongst the swarms fixed like the rooted stars, my folk is a streaming Comet,
Comet out of the Asian tiger-blackness,
The Wanderer of Eternity, the eternal Wandering Jew . . .

Ho! we have turned against the mightiest of our young men
And in that denial we have taken on the Christ,
And the two thieves beside the Christ,
And the Magdalen at the feet of the Christ,
And the Judas with thirty silver pieces selling the Christ,
And our twenty centuries in Europe have the shape of a Cross
On which we have hung in disaster and glory. . . .

Mighty race! mighty race! — my flesh, my flesh
Is a cup of song,
Is a well in Asia.

LOUIS UNTERMEYER (1885-)

Louis Untermeyer's earliest work was a volume of poems and a volume of parodies. He has since so far developed both gifts that half a dozen volumes of spirited poems stand to his credit and his *Collected Parodies* (Harcourt), containing *Including Horace* and *Heavens*, is the most brilliant travestying of contemporary versification, among other matters, that we possess in the United States. *Challenge* (Century) was the first book of poems of Untermeyer's to count. It showed his radical sympathies, revealed his gift of irony, and his command of metrics. *These Times* (1917) demonstrated his increase in range; *The New Adam* (1920) was even sharper and subtler; and his latest, *Burning Bush* (Harcourt), consolidates his gains. He has always written vividly, frequently with bite and tang. His *Roast Leviathan*, the title-poem featuring Hebrew myth, incorporated a remarkable fantasia. His critical collections of poetry, *Modern American Poetry*, *Modern British Poetry*, *This Singing World*, and *Yesterday and Today*, are known all over the country. He is the best of our poetry anthologists.

Untermeyer has, beside paraphrasing the poems of Horace, translated the poems of Heine. He has written essays extremely valuable in the study of contemporary poetry, viz.: the book, *American Poetry Since 1900* and the briefer excursion, *The Forms of Poetry*. He has likewise paraphrased a Swiss book of stories for children, *The Fat of the Cat*. He has written a novel, *Moses*. His versatility is most marked. In life, rather than literature, it has been no less so. His first ambition was to become a composer; as a boy of sixteen he was a semi-professional pianist; the next year he entered his father's jewelry manufactury and after almost twenty years service as: first, designer, then factory-manager, and, finally, vice-president of the concern, he retired in 1923.

He then studied abroad for two years; since which time he has followed literature alone. In his early days he was on the editorial staff of *The Masses* and the later *Liberator*, and one of the editors of *The Seven Arts*, a periodical that for a time, in the early years of the War, promised much for American letters.

Untermeyer has achieved distinctively. He has made an impressive contribution to our literature.

SWIMMERS

I took the crazy short-cut to the bay;
Over a fence or two and through a hedge,
Jumping a private road, along the edge
Of backyards full of drying wash it lay.
I ran, electric with elation,
Sweating, impetuous and wild
For a swift plunge in the sea that smiled,
Quiet and luring, half a mile away.
This was the final thrill, the last sensation
That capped four hours of violence and laughter:
To have, with casual friends and casual jokes,
Hard sport, a cold swim and fresh linen after . . .
And now, the last set being played and over,
I hurried past the ruddy lakes of clover;
I swung my racket at astonished oaks,
My arm still tingling from aggressive strokes.
Tennis was over for the day —
I took the leaping short-cut to the bay.

Then the swift plunge into the cool, green dark —
The windy waters rushing past me, through me;
Filled with a sense of some heroic lark,
Exulting in a vigor clean and roomy.
Swiftly I rose to meet the feline sea
That sprang upon me with a hundred claws,
And grappled, pulled me down and played with me.

Then, tense and breathless in the tightening pause
When one wave grows into a toppling acre,
I dived headlong into the foremost breaker,
Pitting against a cold and turbulent strife
The feverish intensity of life.

Out of the foam I lurched and rode the wave,
Swimming, hand over hand, against the wind;
I felt the sea's vain pounding, and I grinned
Knowing I was its master, not its slave.
Oh, the proud total of those lusty hours —
The give and take of rough and vigorous tussles
With happy sinews and rejoicing muscles;
The knowledge of my own miraculous powers,
Feeling the force in one small body bent
To curb and tame this towering element.

Back on the curving beach I stood again,
Facing the bath-house, when a group of men,
Stumbling beneath some sort of weight, went by.
I could not see the hidden thing they carried;
I only heard: "He never gave a cry" —
"Who's going to tell her?" — "Yes, and they just married" —
"Such a good swimmer, too." . . . And then they passed;
Leaving the silence throbbing and aghast.

A moment there my buoyant heart hung slack,
And then the glad, barbaric blood came back
Singing a livelier tune; and in my pulse
Beat the great wave that surges and exults. . . .
Why I was there and whither I must go
I did not care. Enough for me to know
The same unresting struggle and the glowing
Beauty of spendthrift hours, bravely showing
Life, an adventure perilous and gay;
And Death, a long and vivid holiday.

STEEL MILL

The core of him is hate
Down in his stones he waits and growls for war.
His iron bones strain to destroy; his bowels
Are grinding steel that crush the maggots he contains.
His fires are rushing anger.
Every churning wheel,
Fed and well-greased with blood,
Turns with a redder purpose —
Released through passion to create
Fresh agonies of hate.

Thrusting his back against the night,
He cracks the full moon into splintered glass
And crusts of winter-bitten ponds.
Timidly clustered houses sleep
Deep in their bonds of silence.
He howls to see small hours pass
And roars dark blasphemies into their ears.
He calls to his coarse brood,
Spitting lewd sparks upon the bleeding dawn
That lifts its head, unheeding,
Christ-like, compassionate.

Hating the light of peace, now that the stars are dead,
His chimneys throw their bars against the east.
Daylight plows through them.
Roused by the clamor,
Naked, new,
The sun,
Answering hate with heat,
Beats his great hammer on the smoking back.
Morning. Fresh fires. Attack.
Up go black arms tearing apart the sky!
Down swarms a heaven of flaring motes
Exploding into laughter!
Up go the shafts of fear and hatred!

Down fly the spears of love!
The battle never clears.
The rhythm never varies.
The rhythm has no ending.
Conflict. Consent.
Death at life's core.
Rising. Rending.
War! War!

APOCRYPHAL SOLILOQUIES

Goliath:

See the dazzled stripling stand,
Naked as an empty hand —
And here am I, a clanking mass
Blotting out the yellow grass
With a body only sent
For the world's astonishment:
Arms as great as monstrous boughs
Where no bird would dare to house,
Fingers like some poisonous growth
Even jungle-beasts must loathe,
And a goggling head awry
Like a black moon in the sky....
Here I wait, uneagerly
For the child that faces me,
Frightened by my length of limb —
And the clean, young grace of him
Unaware that cheek and brow
Taste their last of sunlight now.
Oh, that it were I, not he!
Oh, that God would take from me
This power only schooled in harm
And send it through that puny arm
With such a fire that it might well
Break through this hugely rotting shell....

But there will be no miracle.
There is no help. Young David, fly!
I am destruction's demon, aye,
Too sick to live, too strong to die.

David:

And there he looms, no more defiant
Than any hill. So that's a giant!
This is the thing that should alarm me
More than the sight of hell's own army
Commanded by its master devil.
But this — why this is nothing evil!
Its eyes are cow's eyes, it looks civil,
A thing that only babes could fear. . . .
But I — what am I doing here?
What part have I, the least of shepherds,
Among these hungry spears and scabbards?
What! Have I tended sheep and cattle
Only to lead the wolves to battle?
Am I possessed of howling demons
That I should seek the blood of humans?
God, take this madness out of me.
Give me my pastures, let me be —
Far from this clash of words and weapons —
Where nothing cries and little happens
Save when a star leaps from the heavens
Or a new rush of song enlivens
The heart that beats in balanced measures,
Unshaken by more passionate seizures.
See, I will fling this silly pebble
High in the air and end my trouble
And pluck harp-strings again till they
Charm every darker thought away. . . .
Come, old Goliath, come and play!

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT (1886–)

THE elder brother of Stephen Vincent Benét, William Rose Benét (twelve years his senior) was born at Fort Hamilton, New York Harbor in 1886. He comes of a military family, his grandfather and his father both having been graduates of West Point and United States Army officers in the Ordnance Department. He had his schooling in various cities, graduating finally from the Albany Academy, and after that from the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University in 1907. His first volume of poems was published five years later, *Merchants from Cathay* (Yale University Press). This volume was voluminous and uneven, betraying here and there the influence of Keats and of Browning. His second book, *The Falconer of God* (Yale Press, 1914), though less influenced was thinner in texture. In this year also he assisted his first wife, Teresa Frances Thompson, in a translation of Paul Claudel's *Connaissance de l'Est*, remoulding her literal translation. In 1916 he produced a long poem, *The Great White Wall* (Yale Press), based upon the exploits of Timur, the Oriental conqueror. *The Burglar of the Zodiac* (Yale Press) followed in 1918, *Perpetual Light*, a memorial to his first wife, in 1919, and *Moons of Grandeur* (Doran) in 1920. His selected poems, under the title of *Man Possessed* (Doran), were published in 1927 and dedicated to his second wife, the distinguished poet and novelist, Elinor Wylie. A section therein, of his latest and some of his best poems, is inscribed to her.

Benét's earliest work for a living was as one of the editors of the *Century Magazine*, where he spent seven years. During the War he was in the Air Service as a ground officer. After the war, and after holding several different positions he joined the *Literary Review* of the *New York Evening Post*, and has, since 1924, been one of the editors of *The Saturday Review of Literature*. He is also, at present, editor of the publishing firm of Payson

& Clarke. In the course of his journalistic work he has published a novel, *The First Person Singular*, a volume of fugitive pieces, *Wild Goslings*, and a book for children, *The Flying King of Kurio*.

THE FALCONER OF GOD

I FLUNG my soul to the air like a falcon flying.
I said, "Wait on, wait on, while I ride below!
I shall start a heron soon
In the marsh beneath the moon —
A strange white heron rising with silver on its wings,
Rising and crying
Wordless, wondrous things;
The secret of the stars, of the world's heart-strings
The answer to their woe.
Then stoop thou upon him, and grip and hold him so!"

My wild soul waited on as falcons hover.
I beat the reedy fens as I trampled past.
I heard the mournful loon
In the marsh beneath the moon.
And then with feathery thunder — the bird of my desire
Broke from the cover
Flashing silver fire.
High up among the stars I saw his pinions spire.
The pale clouds gazed aghast
As my falcon stooped upon him, and gripped and held him fast.

My soul dropped through the air — with heavenly plunder? —
Gripping the dazzling bird my dreaming knew?
Nay! but a piteous freight,
A dark and heavy weight
Despoiled of silver plumage, its voice forever stilled, —
All of the wonder

Gone that ever filled
Its guise with glory. Oh, bird that I have killed,
How brilliantly you flew
Across my rapturous vision when first I dreamed of you!

Yet I fling my soul on high with new endeavor,
And I ride the world below with a joyful mind.
I shall start a heron soon
In the marsh beneath the moon —
A wondrous silver heron its inner darkness fledges!
I beat forever
The fens and the sedges.
The pledge is still the same — for all disastrous pledges,
All hopes resigned!
My soul still flies above me for the quarry it shall find.

THERE LIVED A LADY IN MILAN

There lived a lady in Milan
Wrought for a madness unto Man,
A fawn Il Moro could not tame;
Her beauty unbedecked with pearls
More than all Beatrice's girls,
Her eyes a secret subtle flame.

Brocade wherein her body dressed
Was hallowed; flowers her footstep pressed
Suspired incense ere they died.
Her father mazed with alchemy
Wrought in his cellar ceaselessly.
She lived in quiet, gentle pride.

And by her garden in his hour
Passed Leonardo, come with power
From Florence. So he saw her face
Bending above the shrivelled stalks

Of autumn on the garden walks.
And Leonardo drank her grace.

She was as if a sunset were
With fresher colors, clearer air,
And a more golden coil of cloud.
She was as if all citherns swooned
With one rich harmony myriad-tuned,
Haunting, enchanting, pure and proud.

And Leonardo said, "Ladye,
I know not what you do to me
Who have and have not, seek nor find.
The sea-shell and the falcon's feather,
Greece and the rock and shifting weather
Have taught me many things of mind.

"My heart has taught me many things,
And so have emperors, popes, and kings,
And so have leaves and green May-flies;
Yea, I have learned from bird and beast,
From slouching dwarf and ranting priest.
Yet, in the end, how am I wise?

"Though with dividers and a quill
I weave some miracle of will, —
Say, that men fly, — though I design
For peace or war a thousand things
Gaining applause from dukes and kings, —
Though soft and deft my colors shine,

"Though my quick wit breed thunderbolts
I may not loose on all these dolts,
Things they are babes to comprehend, —
Though from the crevice in stone or lime
I trace grave outlines mocking Time, —
I know when I am beaten, Friend!

"Say that there lived of old a saint
Even Leonardo dared not paint,
Even Leonardo dared not draw, —
Too perfect in her breathing prime
For colors to transmit to time
Or quill attempt, — aye, ev'n in awe!

"Say this, cold histories, and say
I looked not on her from this day
Lest frenzied I destroy my art.
O golden lily, — how she stands
Listening! Beauty, — ah, your hands,
Your little hands tear out my heart!

"Do you not know you are so fair,
Brighter than springtime in the air?
What says your mirror to your mind?"
"Phantom," she whispered, "Do you plead
With ghostly gestures? . . . Ah, indeed,
Pity a lady deaf and blind

"Since birth!" . . . Then Leonardo turned
Saluting, though the sunset burned
In nimbus round her, — went his way
In daze, repeating "God's defect,
Even he! — and masterpiece elect!"
He never saw her from that day.

LEONARD BACON (1887–)

In Leonard Bacon we have one of the most accomplished satirists of our time, who brought the play of his wit to bear upon academic things in his *Ph.D.'s*, has exploited the Byronic stanza in an extraordinary fantastic epic, *Ulug Beg* (Knopf), and elsewhere, and more recently, has displayed a more serious and searching

poetic gift in *Animula Vagula*. Leonard Bacon, the son of Nathaniel Terry and Helen Hazard Bacon, was educated at St. George's School, Rhode Island, and at Yale College, graduating from the latter in the class of 1909. He worked on a rubber plantation, cotton plantation, and a cattle ranch during the year 1909–10. In the autumn of 1910 he became an instructor in the English Department of the University of California, and was on the staff of that institution, though absent during two years of the war, till 1923, when he resigned and has since devoted himself to literature.

In 1912 he married Martha Stringham. He has three daughters. His earliest book, an exceedingly rare volume, is *The Scrannel Pipe*, his first essays in poetry, written while in college and published in 1909. In 1913 appeared *Heroic Ballads of Servia*, which he had translated with G. R. Noyes. The next year came Bacon's translation of *The Song of Roland*, and five years later his translation, with R. Selden Rose, of *The Lay of the Cid*. *Ulug Beg*, his first entirely creative published work since his earliest book, was brought out in 1923. *Ph.D.'s* followed two years later, and *Animula Vagula* (Harper) appeared in 1926. Since then he has published a book of poems entitled *Guinea Fowl* (Harper), a number of which are satiric. It includes also several Western ballads written in collaboration with Rivers Browne. His *The Legend of Quincibald* is his most recent achievement, a spiritual and satirical fantasy. The gifts of Leonard Bacon are unique. He ranges from "lively to severe" with incorrigible energy. His scholarship has never blunted his intense zest.

From ANIMULA VAGULA

I

This is the road to Hades. We go down.
Valor that wore the crown,

Honor that bore
Such good repute before
Droops like an idiot his bewildered head.
And innocence is dead.
Nor do these things revive
Where that stern wind is blowing.
And that last sunset, glowing
Vestige of light that is no more alive,
Turns ashy like a coal.
"We have arrived, my soul."

What I loved and hated
Where are they now?
The zest unsatiated?
The pleasure that I waited?
The beauty that somehow
Has been abated?
They are gone.
Why should I struggle on?

In the chasm spews the asp.
And the salamander swims
Through a dead pool nuzzling limbs
That were sweet to a man's grasp.
There is neither form nor shape
In that execrable deep.
There is neither sleep
Nor escape.
And dream not of the sun,
Of a girl, or of a rose,
What was done, or what undone,
Or finished, or begun.
The terrible deep knows
What vengeance it will take.
Therefore wake.

Keep the constant thought.
Trust the true feeling.

They are in the deep
Where the asp and adder sleep,
With the hurt and with the healing —
In the dreadful darkness caught,
With the horror overfraught,
Whence there is no appealing.
When the lights are paling,
And the hopes failing,
Comes the truth revealing.

XIII

Here I lie coiled
In the swampy grass where the pink orchids are.
Go slow, you with the eyes that seek a star.
Watch where you tread.
I am Death and am not dead.
I am hidden and when I like
May strike.
And when at the time and place
Up from the shadow I dart,
You will suddenly start
And terror will bleach your face
And numbness sicken your heart.
And my black eye shall brighten in the sun
As the venom begins to stun.
Turn from the star to the weed
Where the orchids hang.
Mine is a fearful fang.
Take heed.

COLORADO MORTON'S RIDE

Colorado Morton's riding far.
He won't be back with the Circle-Bar.
The Boss he sent him in to town
To ship the last of the longhorns down,
Although he hadn't no business head,

And it was the turn of me or Red.
So Colorado Morton run them brutes
Down the Dead Horse from the Coyote Buttes,
And three days later delivered them steers
To the Boss's agent, which his name was Beers.
And he was a shiftless no 'count clerk
That didn't have nothing to do but shirk.
He says to Colorado, he says: "Old pard,
"Here's a wire for you. You sign the card.
"You pen your cattle, and sit on your tail,
"For the West-bound limited's jumped the rail."
Colorado Morton he read his wire,
Which would make a better man than him perspire,
It wouldn't give no pleasure to you and me.
It come from his sister up in B. C.:
"My husband's hanging, and it should be you
"And God forgive you. Sister Lou."
And she told him where the hanging was at,
Day after termorrer at Medicine Hat
Colorado Morton hadn't meant no harm.
There was a shindy up at Broken Arm.
Him and his brother-in-law Jim Graeme
Were sitting in at a poker-game,
And a dirty Swede of a lumber-jack
Dealt himself three aces from under the pack.
I never held with the blame Canucks,
They sure are a bunch of ornery bucks.
And one thing's certain as Hell. They ain't
Got no respect for a sinner or a saint.
If any killing you happen to have done,
By God they'll hang you, sure as a gun,
Unless you can put it in evidence
The aforesaid killing was self-defence.
And self-defence is a damn poor name
For a row that started in a poker-game.
Jim Graeme was there you bet your tooting,
But Colorado Morton done the shooting.

Burk Hyne of the mounted police butts in,
And the boys skinned out and rode like sin,
And cutting the corners mighty fine,
They just got over the Idaho line.
Jim Graeme fer a month or so he played
Around with the boys till the dust had laid.
But Mort, as soon as he got across,
Settled down punching steers for the Boss.
He done his job like a puncher should.
But the valves in his heart weren't never no good.
And he used to pant in the mountain air,
And he used to cuss, and he used to swear.
And whenever his pony would buck or jump
His heart would hammer and his heart would thump.
But just the same old Mort was a star,
And the best horse-wrangler in the Circle-Bar.
  Now Mort when he read that telegram through,
He sure was a puzzled buckeroo.
He says to Beers: "You son of a gun
"Why didn't you send it to me on the run?
"You send me a wire to Medicine Hat,
"And tell 'em I'm coming and that is that."
And Beers he answers: "The wires is down,
"And ye can't get a telegram out of town."
"My God," says Morton, "they'll hang poor Jim.
"If he is Lou's husband, I'm fond of him.
"I do not savvy a job of this style,
"And it's every inch of two hundred mile."
And Beers he says: "It's one Hell of a ride.
"You'll never make it, and you'll hang beside."
But Colorado Morton he says: "Good night!
"All I care is are the cinches tight."
  And away he gallops up the yaller hill,
While his heart it hammered and his heart stood still.
That doggone cayuse was a good mustang.
And he must have figured that his boss would hang,
But anyhow he ate up the flat,

Stretching away for Medicine Hat.
That doggone cayuse was doggone tired
When they hit the border beyond Fort Bayard.
The sweat was running on every hair,
And it didn't do Mort no good to swear.
Men will keep going on their nerve or their head,
But you cannot ride a horse when he's dead.
And Colorado Morton couldn't ride
That doggone cayuse after it died.
And there he was on the edge of the snow,
With a hundred and twenty miles to go.
But he looks and he sees a camp-fire shine
A thousand feet below timber-line.
And he says: "I'll hump it down and see,
"If those blighters will lend a horse to me.
"If they haven't a pony, I guess I'm stung
"And poor Jim Graeme is due to get hung.
"Which upon my honor he never should
"With me alive and the hanging so good."
And down he come while the night was falling,
Down the side of the cañon, slipping and crawling.
And he seed a red jacket hanging on the pole,
And it was the mounted police patrol,
And he seed the yaller chevron shine.
It was Mr. mounted policeman Hyne.
And "Hyne," says Morton, "Jimmy Graeme
"Is going to swing for that poker game.
"You come in late, and you never seed
"That I was the guy that shot the Swede.
"My doggone cayuse's tire's gone flat.
"And I got to get to Medicine Hat.
"I got to get there tomorrer by one,
"Or he'll hang at two as sure as a gun."
And Hyne he says: "Well I'll be shot.
"You sure must like Jim Graeme a lot.
"Climb on my buckskin and hit the trail,
"And my very best wishes when you get to jail."

"And Mort," he says, "By the Perkins Slough
"There's a horse herd will be some use to you.
"There's a salt-lick there, and my buck's no 'count.
"And if he plays out you can catch a mount.
"I'll give you supper here, if you like.
"But if you don't then for God's sake hike."
That yaller buckskin he played up fine.
He wasn't no 'count in spite of Hyne.
He slid down the hill as smooth as a tile,
And over the flat for sixty mile.
But sixty mile is the end of power,
When a horse goes eighteen miles an hour.
And when he come to the Perkins Slough,
Mort picked up a horse-trail spandy-new.
And all alone 'neath the morning-star
The best horse-wrangler of the Circle-Bar
Caught the bunch in a cotton-wood tangle,
And wrangled the last horse he'd ever wrangle.
I seen the brute later, and I've heard tell
His sire was a stud-horse in the teams of Hell —
A four-year-old stallion built like a crane,
Thin as a spit of the Bad Lands rain.
His bones stuck out all over his nibs.
That horse wan't nothing but hocks and ribs.
But I know horses, and I'll tell you this.
A thin devil's worse than a fat devil is.
He wouldn't do nothing but stand on his ear,
And buck and sidewind, and pitch, and rear.
Colorado Mort got pretty well plastered,
But somehow or other he beat that bastard.
Now I seen Vampa doing his dance,
But Vampa to him wan't a circumstance.
He was young, and friendly, and tender, and true
Beside that beast in the Perkins Slough.
Colorado Mort was hard to pile.
It was one long sidewind for sixty mile.
It was hammer and slam, and crash and pound,

And a buck at every hole in the ground.
And the big jack-rabbits streaked over the level,
As they seed a man come riding the Devil,
Riding the Devil, and standing pat
All the way into Medicine Hat.
Colorado Morton stuck to that tramp,
Like an extra-special-delivery stamp.
And at quarter to twelve, as bold as brass,
Sidewound in the "The City of Natural Gas."
And he come to the Judge, and "Judge," says he,
"About this Broken Arm shiveree.
"Them witnesses is a lousy breed,
"For I was the guy that shot the Swede."
The judge looks up in a casual way:
"You say you shot him? The Hell you say!"
"Yes," says Mort, "If it's all the same,
"You'd better hang me instead of Jim Graeme."
And his heart it hammered, and his heart it hopped,
And he said, "I got here," and his blame heart stopped.
That judge was always a square old porpoise.
He issued a writ of Habeas Corpus,
Which wasn't no good, because Jim Graeme
Got shot next week in a poker-game.
And everyone said it was tough on Lou
To lose her brother and her husband too.
The mounted police thought Mort was a sport,
And they all chipped in for a stone for Mort.
And they cut this epitaph on the stone:
"He travels the farthest who travels alone."
Alone he travelled, and he travelled far.
He won't be back with the Circle-bar.

In Collaboration with Rivers Browne

GRACE HAZARD CONKLING (1878–)

For nearly fifteen years Grace Hazard Conkling has been teaching English at Smith College, from which she herself graduated in 1899. Between her graduation and her return to her alma mater she studied music abroad. Her first book was *Afternoons of April*, which appeared in 1915; her *Wilderness Songs* followed in 1920. *Ship's Log* (Knopf), of 1924, bears traces of the influence of Amy Lowell, but also points to an enlarging of range and an increase of poetic power, promises which are kept in *Flying Fish* (Knopf, 1926).

In her earlier work Mrs. Conkling excelled at the delicately pastoral. Her poems are now of richer color and of firmer fiber. At first she used rhyme almost entirely, but her later experiments in free verse have been remarkably successful. Beside being a poet herself, her daughter, Hilda Conkling, now eighteen, was the author of a first book of poems at the age of nine, *Poems by a Little Girl* (Stokes), which she dictated to her mother. This first volume was soon followed by another, *Shoes of the Wind* (Stokes), the child revealing a precocious faculty for striking phrase. She became, in fact, the child marvel of her time eight years ago. What Hilda Conkling may write in maturity one cannot prophesy, but the brilliant daughter of so brilliant a mother is sure to go far.

THE DIFFERENT DAY

I wonder if the hawk knew
Morning was different?
He stood so long below the sun
With the blue reins of the horizon
In his beak.

There was a vireo
Hid in the hair of the mountain-side.

I can recall his tuneless warble
Because it wrote itself on oak-leaves
Encrusted with gold of noon.
Always I see its monotony
Shining,
Curved like words of water
Over a bright ledge. . . .

Afternoon tossed a storm over the mountain,
Lost it in the valley.
A chickadee hung by one claw
Defying the probable . . .

What was there in the day
Made us so still?
The mountain held us under clouds like sails.
There was spray on the wind . . . spray on the inland wind . . .
Or was it fire?
Did you feel the heave of the earth, did you see flame
Along the wind at sundown?
Did you remember strangeness
We had lived before?

Oh love, my love,
Now at last with you
I can wonder:
Now with you I can dream.
Now wild earth flying
Pours me mist of suns
And darkness golden!

PYTHON

A LITHE beautiful fear
Thrusts through the parted canes.

I should have known it near
By the blind blood in my veins.

Here is one way of death,
Though with no threat for me.
Now I have caught my breath,
Now that my brain can see,

Amber pours over the ground,
Darkness of amber too:
Blue of the gulf profound,
Superb and bitter blue

Sharp on the lacquered black.
Gold-corniced groping head,
Bold-swerving diamond back,
Why wish such beauty dead?

Why thwart such will to live?
Better to think twice.
It is I who am fugitive
From Paradise.

PART IV

HERVEY ALLEN (1889–)

Best known now, to the average reader, for his study of Poe in *Israfel* (Doran), published several years ago, and, perhaps, for his graphic book of war memories, *Toward the Flame* (Doran), Hervey Allen first caught our attention in 1922, with the publication of *Carolina Chansons*, in collaboration with the poet, Du Bose Heyward, the author of *Porgy*. The year prior to this Allen's first book of poems, *Wampum and Old Gold*, had been issued by the Yale University Press, and in the year of the Chansons an Aztec narrative poem, *The Bride of Huitzil*, was published. Three years later came *Earth Moods and Other Poems* (Harper), Allen's most striking poetry to date. He is an ardent protagonist for the revival of verse of epic sweep and range. His own best gift is that of gorgeous fantasy. His personality is virile and purposeful. This latter quality constitutes the chief danger to his art. When he lets his wild imagination soar free he frequently achieves breath-taking lines, when he plans and considers his "message" carefully dullness creeps over his verse. But his native energy is such as to place him as one of the most promising younger poets of our time.

William Hervey Allen was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and went to the United States Naval Academy, although he resigned before graduating. He was a Second Lieutenant of Infantry in our Army on the Mexican border in 1916, and a first Lieutenant in France, where he was wounded and whence he was invalided home to the United States in 1918. With Du Bose Heyward he founded the Poetry Society of South Carolina, having lived in Charleston for a time after the War.

THE TOWER OF GENGHIS KHAN

It stands upon a plain in far Cathay,
A tower like a needle with its eye
Through which the desert sun strikes once a day
At noontide when the mountain shadows die.

Eastward the plain swoops downward and away,
Folding about the towers of U-ban,
Where herds of yaks and fleece-clad Tartars stray
Along Mongolian marches of the Khan.

Ever the Earth turns eastward toward the night,
Dragging the tower with it till you spy
The dragon watchfires of the Heavenly Wall
Tingeing the Chinese sky.

Night pales to day; and day burns into noon,
Till once again the sun darts through the eye
At midday when the watchman sounds a tune
On yak's horn, like a dying eagle's cry.

Age after age that lonely horn has told
The noons of endless centuries that pass
Slower than granite turning into mould,
Long as the tower's shadow on the grass.

Only a story lingers in U-ban
Of once, how in the pride of crazy power,
They saw one scarlet sunset Genghis Khan
Climb to the very top of that same tower

And toward the East his snowwhite mantle fling;
Sunward the bloody signal of his vest, —
So arrows whistling like a wild duck's wing
Fell on the startled cities of the West.

JOSEPH AUSLANDER (1897--)

The salience and originality of Joseph Auslander's epithet and precise phrase startled one into immediate recognition of a new poet of great promise, when he published his first book, *Sunrise Trumpets*, in 1924. Padraic Colum called attention to these felicities in an introduction. Auslander is a Philadelphian who studied at Harvard and the Sorbonne and later for a period became an instructor at Harvard. *Cyclops' Eye* (Harper, 1926) was his second book. In this he essayed some stark narrative, as in *Steel*, *Two that Unlatched Heaven*, and *Knockout*.

There is astonishingly little limping expression in these two books of Auslander's which, together, give him a definite and high place in American poetry. He can write starkly or gently, with a lingering music. In almost every poem there is some astonishing turn of phrase. Sometimes he treats of trivial matters, but in this respect his second book is a stride ahead of his first. He is an unusually accomplished poet, one who is a thorough craftsman. His workmanship is never at the mercy of the intensity of emotion patent in his best verse; neither does the working of his lines into finality of phrase destroy that intensity. Auslander is gradually enlarging his range. He gives great promise for the future and has already accomplished much. He is an excellent reader aloud of his own work, resonant and powerful. With Frank Ernest Hill he has written *The Wingéd Horse*, a splendid history of the great poets of all time and of the growth of poetry through the ages.

STEEL

I

This man is dead.
Everything you can say

Is now quite definitely said:
This man held up his head
And had his day,
Then turned his head a little to one way
And slept instead.

Young horses give up their pride:
You break them in
By brief metallic discipline
And something else beside. . . .
So this man died.

While he lived I did not know
This man; I never heard
His name. Now that he lies as though
He were remembering some word
He had forgotten yesterday or so,
It seems a bit absurd
That his blank lids and matted hair should grow
Suddenly familiar. . . . Let him be interred.

Steady now. . . . That was his wife
Making that small queer inarticulate sound
Like a knife;
Steady there. . . . Let him slip easy into the ground;
Do not look at her,
She is fighting for breath. . . .
She is a foreigner. . . .
Polak . . . like him . . . she cannot understand. . . .
It is hard. . . . Leave her alone with death
And a shovelful of sand.

"O the pity of it, the pity of it, Iago!" . . .
Christ, what a hell
Is packed into that line! Each syllable
Bleeds when you say it. . . . No matter: Chicago
Is a far cry from Cracow;
And anyhow

What have Poles
To do with such extraneous things as hearts and souls?

There is nothing here to beat the breast over,
Nothing to relish the curious,
Not a smell of the romantic; this fellow
Was hardly your yearning lover
Frustrated; no punchinello;
But just a hunky in a steel mill. Why then fuss
Because his heavy Slavic face went yellow
With the roaring furnace dust? Now that he is in
The cool sweet crush of dirt, to hell with your sobbing violin,
Your sanctimonious 'cello!
Let the mill bellow!

II

If you have ever had to do with steel:
The open-hearth, the blooming-mill, the cranes
Howling under a fifty-ton load, trains
Yowling in the black pits where you reel
Groggily across a sluice of orange fire, a sheet
Tongued from the conduits that bubble blue green; if
Ever you have got a single whiff
Out of the Bessemer's belly, felt the drag
And drip and curdle of steel spit hissing against hot slag;
If ever you have had to eat
One hundred and thirty degrees of solid heat,
Then screwed the hose to the spigot, drowned in steam,
Darted back when the rods kicked up a stream
Of fluid steel and had to duck the ladle that slobbered over, and scream
Your throat raw to get your *Goddam!* through —
Then I am talking to you.

Steve did that for ten years with quiet eyes,
And body down to the belt caked wet

With hardening cinder splash and stiffening sweat
And whatever else there is that clots and never utterly dries.
He packed the mud and dolomite, made back-wall,
Herded the heat, and placed his throw in tall
Terrible arcs behind smoked glasses, and watched it fall
Heavy and straight and true,
While the blower kept the gas at a growl and the brew
Yelled red and the melter hollered "Heow!" and you raveled
Her out and the thick soup gargled and you traveled
Like the devil to get out from under. . . . Well, Steve
For ten years of abdominal heft and heave
Worked steel. So much for that. And after
Ten years of night shifts, fourteen hours each,
The Bessemers burn your nerves up, bleach
Rebellion out of your bones; and laughter
Sucked clean out of your guts becomes
More dead than yesterday's feet moving to yesterday's drums. . . .
And so they called him "Dummy." The whole gang
From pit boss down to the last mud-slinger cursed
And squirted tobacco juice in a hot and mixed harangue
Of Slovene, Serb, Dutch, Dago, Russian, and — worst —
English as hard and toothless as a skull.
And Steve stared straight ahead of him and his eyes were dull.

Anna was Steve's little woman
Who labored bitterly enough,
Making children of stern and tragic stuff
And a rapture that was hammered rough,
Spilling steel into their spines, yet keeping them wistful and human. . . .
Anna had her work to do
With cooking and cleaning

And washing the window curtains white as new,
Washing them till they wore through:
For her the white curtains had a meaning —
And starching them white against the savage will
Of the grim dust belching incessantly out of the mill;
Soaking and scrubbing and ironing against that gritty reek
Until her head swam and her knees went weak
And she could hardly speak.
A terrible unbeaten purpose persisted:
Color crying against a colorless world!
White against black at the windows flung up, unfurled!
Candles and candle light!
The flags of a lonely little woman twisted
Out of her hunger for cool clean beauty, her hunger for white! —
These were her banners and this was her fight!

No matter how tired she was, however she would ache
In every nerve, she must boil the meat and bake
The bread, and the curtains must go up white — for Steve's sake!
One thing was certain:
That John and Stanley and Helen and Mary and the baby Steven
Must be kept out of the mills and the mill life, even
If it meant that her man and she would break
Under the brunt of it: she had talked it through with him
A hundred times. . . . Let her eyeballs split, her head swim —
The window must have its curtain!

III

Lately Steve had stopped talking altogether
When he slumped in with his dinner pail and heavily
Hunched over his food.

So Anna and the children let him be;
She was afraid to ask him why or whether
As he sat with his eyes glued
On vacancy.
So Anna and the children let him brood.
Only sometimes he would suddenly look at them and her
In a ghastly fixed blur
Till a vast nausea of terror and compassion stood
Blundering in her heart and swarming in her blood —
And she shivered and knew somehow that it was not good.

And then it happened: Spring had come
Like the silver needle-note of a fife,
Like a white plume and a green lance and a glittering knife
And a jubilant drum.
But Steve did not hear the earth hum:
Under the earth he could feel merely the fever
And the shock of roots of steel forever;
April had no business with the pit
Or the people — call them people — who breathed in it.
The mill was Steve's huge harlot and his head
Lay between breasts of steel on a steel bed,
Locked in a steel sleep and his hands were riveted.

IV

And then it happened: nobody could tell whose
Fault it was, but a torrent of steel broke loose,
Trapped twenty men in the hot frothy mess. . . .
After a week, more or less,
The company, with appropriate finesse,
Having allowed the families time to move,
Expressed a swift proprietary love
By shoving the dump of metal and flesh and shoes
And cotton and cloth and felt
Back in the furnace to remelt.

And that was all, though a dispatch so neat,
So wholly admirable, so totally sweet,
Could not but stick in Steve's dulled brain.
And whether it was the stink or the noise or just plain
Inertia combined with heat,
Steve, one forenoon, on stark deliberate feet,
Let the charging-machine's long iron finger beat
The side of his skull in. . . . There was no pain.

For one fierce instant of unconsciousness
Steve tasted the incalculable caress;
For one entire day he slept between
Sheets that were white and cool, embalmed and clean;
For twenty-four hours he touched the hair of death,
Ran his fingers through it, and it was a deep dark green —
And he held his breath.

This man is dead.
Everything you can say
Is now quite definitely said.

STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT (1898–)

This one of our younger poets was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and named after his grandfather who had been Chief of Ordnance and Brigadier General in the United States Army. Benét's father, from whom he inherited his love of literature and wide reading, was retired as a Colonel of the Ordnance Department a few years ago. The younger Benét, whose brother, William Rose Benét, is twelve years his senior, grew up in the environment of Government Arsenals, and spent his most formative years in California and at the Augusta Arsenal in Georgia, where he attended the Summerville Academy and there prepared for Yale. Before entering

college a first small book of poetry by him had been published, *Five Men and Pompey*, a series of dramatic monologues. His second volume, *Young Adventure*, appeared from the Yale University Press, a year before his graduation. This was followed by *Heavens and Earth* (Holt) in 1920, and by *Tiger Joy* (Doran), in 1925. Meanwhile he had been writing novels and short stories. *The Beginning of Wisdom* (Holt), an unusual first novel, was followed by *Young People's Pride* (Holt), in 1922, *Jean Huguenot* (Holt), in 1923, and *Spanish Bayonet* (Doran), a remarkably stirring and vivid romance, in 1926. His latest work is *John Brown's Body* (Doubleday, Doran), a long poem of great range and power, an epic of the American Civil War, a Pulitzer-Prize winner.

At the age of thirty, Stephen Vincent Benét has exhibited unusual versatility. A selection has never been made from his many short stories by the writing of which, and by his other literary work, he has supported himself and his wife and children. But several of the stories are notable. He is married to Rosemary Carr of Chicago, and has a daughter, Stephanie Jane and a son, Thomas Carr. He has won many prizes for his poetry, among them *The Nation* Prize of 1923 with his *King David*, afterward published separately in book-form, and later included in *Tiger Joy*. Both in poetry and prose there is a sharply individual flavor to all he writes, a burning energy, an exceptionally vivid color. He can be tender, humorous, ironic, and intensely dramatic. Within the next few years he may be looked to further to prove his exceptional gifts in American letters.

KING DAVID

David sang to his hooknosed harp:
"The Lord God is a jealous God!
His violent vengeance is swift and sharp!
And the Lord is King above all gods!

"Blest be the Lord, through years untold,
The Lord Who has blessed me a thousandfold!

"Cattle and concubines, corn and hives
Enough to last me a dozen lives.

"Plump, good women with noses flat,
Marrowful blessings, weighty and fat.

"I wax in His peace like a pious gourd,
The Lord God is a pleasant God,
Break mine enemy's jaw, O Lord!
For the Lord is King above all gods!"

His hand dropped slack from the tunable strings,
A sorrow came on him — a sorrow of kings.

A sorrow sat on the arm of his throne,
An eagle sorrow with claws of stone.

"I am merry, yes, when I am not thinking,
But life is nothing but eating and drinking.

"I can shape my psalms like daggers of jade,
But they do not shine like the first I made.

"I can harry the heathen from North to South,
But no hot taste comes into my mouth.

"My wives are comely as long-haired goats,
But I would not care if they cut their throats!

"Where are the maids of the desert tents
With lips like flagons of frankincense?

"Where is Jonathan? Where is Saul?
The captain-towers of Zion wall?

"The trees of cedar, the hills of Nod,
The kings, the running lions of God?

"Their words were a writing in golden dust,
Their names are myrrh in the mouths of the just.

"The sword of the slayer could never divide them —
Would God I had died in battle beside them!"

The Lord looked down from a thunder-clap.
(The Lord God is a crafty God.)
He heard the strings of the shrewd harp snap,
(The Lord who is King above all gods.)

He pricked the king with an airy thorn,
It burnt in his body like grapes of scorn.

The eyelids roused that had drooped like lead.
David lifted his great, tired head.

The thorn stung at him, a fiery bee,
"The world is wide. I will go and see
From the roof of my haughty palace," said he.

II

Bathsheba bathed on her vine-decked roof.
(The Lord God is a mighty God.)
Her body glittered like mail of proof.
(And the Lord is King above all gods.)

Her body shimmered, tender and white
As the flesh of lilies in candlelight.

King David forgot to be old or wise.
He spied on her bathing with sultry eyes.

A breath of spice came into his nose.
He said, "Her breasts are like two young roes."

His eyes were bright with a crafty gleam.
He thought, "Her body is soft as cream."

He straightened himself like an unbent bow
And called a servant and bade him go.

III

Uriah the Hittite came to his lord,
Dusty with war as a well used sword.

A close, trim man like a belt, well-buckled;
A jealous gentleman, hard to cuckold.

David entreated him, soft and bland,
Offered him comfits from his own hand,

Drank with him deep till his eyes grew red,
And laughed in his beard as he went to bed.

The days slipped by without hurry or strife,
Like apple parings under a knife.
And still Uriah kept from his wife.

Lean fear tittered through David's psalm,
"This merry husband is far too calm!"

David sent for Uriah then;
They greeted each other like pious men.

"Thou hast borne the battle, the dust and the heat.
Go down to thy house and wash thy feet!"

Uriah frowned at the words of the king.
His brisk, hard voice had a leaden ring.

"While the hosts of God still camp in the field,
My house to me is a garden sealed.

"How shall I rest while the arrow yet flies?
The dust of the war is still in my eyes."

David spoke with his lion's roar.
"If Peace be a bridle that rubs you sore,
You shall fill your belly with blood and war!"

Uriah departed, calling him kind.
His eyes were serpents in David's mind.

He summoned a captain, a pliable man.
"Uriah the Hittite shall lead the van.

"In the next assault when the fight roars high,
And the Lord God is a hostile God,
Retire from Uriah that he may die.
For the Lord is King above all gods."

IV

The messenger came while King David played
The friskiest ditty ever made.

"News, O King, from our dubious war!
The Lord of Hosts hath prevailed once more!

"His foes are scattered like chirping sparrows,
Their kings lie breathless, feathered with arrows.

"Many are dead of your captains tall.
Uriah the Hittite was first to fall."

David turned from the frolicsome strings
And rent his clothes for the death of kings.

Yet, as he rent them, he smiled for joy,
The sly, wide smile of a wicked boy.

"The powerful grace of the Lord prevails!
He has cracked Uriah between His nails!

"His blessings are mighty, they shall not cease!
And my days henceforth shall be days of peace!"

His mind grew tranquil, smoother than fleece.
He rubbed his body with scented grease,
And his days thenceforward were days of peace.

His days were fair as the flowering lime
— For a little time, for a little time.

And Bathsheba lay in his breast like a dove,
A vessel of amber, made for love.

V

When Bathsheba was great with child,
(The Lord God is a jealous God!)
Portly and meek as a moon grown mild,
(The Lord is king above all gods!)

Nathan, the prophet, wry and dying,
Preached to the king like a locust crying:

"Hearken awhile to a doleful thing!
There were two men in thy land, O King!

"One was rich as a gilded ram.
One had one treasure, a poor ewe-lamb.

"Rich man wasted his wealth like spittle.
Poor man shared with his lamb spare victual.

"A traveler came to the rich man's door.
'Give me to eat, for I hunger sore!'

"Rich man feasted him fatly, true,
But the meat that he gave him was fiends' meat, too,
Stolen and roasted, the poor man's ewe!

"Hearken, my lord, to a deadly thing!
What shall be done with these men, O King?"

David hearkened, seeing it plain,
His heart grew heavy with angry pain:
"Show me the rich man, that he be slain!"

Nathan barked as a jackal can.
"Just, O King! And thou art the man!"

David rose as the thunders rise
When some one in Heaven is telling lies.
But his eyes were weaker than Nathan's eyes.

His huge bulk shivered like quaking sod,
Shoulders bowing to Nathan's rod,
Nathan, the bitter apple of God.

His great voice shook like a runner's, spent.
"My sin hath found me! Oh, I repent!"

Answered Nathan, that talkative Jew:
"For many great services, comely and true,
The Lord of Mercy shall pardon you.

"But the child in Bathsheba, come of your seed,
Shall sicken and die like a blasted weed!"

David groaned when he heard him speak.
The painful tears ran hot on his cheek.

Ashes he cast on his kingly locks.
All night long he lay on the rocks.

Beseeching his Lord with a howling cry:
"Oh Lord God, O my jealous God,
Be kind to the child that it may not die,
For thou art King above all gods!"

VI

Seven long nights he lay there, howling,
A lion wounded, moaning and growling.

Seven long midnights, sorrowing greatly,
While Sin, like a dead man, embraced him straitly.

Till he was abased from his lust and pride
And the child was born and sickened and died.

He rose at last. It was ruddy Day.
And his sin like water had washed away.

He cleansed and anointed, took fresh apparel,
And worshiped the Lord in a tuneful carol.

His servants, bearing the child to bury,
Marveled greatly to see him so merry.

He spoke to them mildly as mid-May weather:
"The child and my sin are perished together.

"He is dead, my son. Though his whole soul yearn to me,
I must go to him, he may not return to me.

"Why should I sorrow for what was pain?
A cherished grief is an iron chain."

He took up his harp, the sage old chief,
His heart felt clean as a new green leaf.

His soul smelt pleasant as rain-wet clover.
"I have sinned and repented and that's all over.

"In his dealings with heathen, the Lord is hard.
But the humble soul is his spikenard."

His wise thoughts fluttered like doves in the air.
"I wonder is Bathsheba still so fair?

"Does she weep for the child that our sin made perish?
I must comfort my ewe-lamb, comfort and cherish.

"The justice of God is honey and balm.
I will soothe her heart with a little psalm."

He went to her chamber, no longer sad,
Walking as light as a shepherd lad.

He found her weeping, her garments rent,
Trodden like straw by God's punishment.
He solaced her out of his great content.

Being but a woman, a while she grieved,
But at last she was comforted, and conceived.

Nine months later she bore him a son.
(The Lord God is a mighty God!)
The name of that child was Solomon.
He was God's tough staff till his days were run!
(And the Lord is King above all gods!)

THE GOLDEN CORPSE

(For Donald Malcolm Campbell)

STRIPPED country, shrunken as a beggar's heart,
Inviolate landscape, hardened into steel,
Where the cold soil shatters under heel

Day after day like metal cracked apart,
Winter Connecticut, whose air is clean
As a new icicle to cut the throat,
Whose black and rigid trees will not demean
Themselves to swagger in a crystal coat.

I hate you as a bastard hates his name
When your cramped hills are hostile with the white.
But, every year, when March comes in the same,
A frozen river rolling in the night,
I must go back and hunt among your snow
Something I lost there, much too long ago.

It was not innocence, it was not scorn,
And yet it had these names and many more.
It was a champion blowing on a horn,
It was the running of a golden boar.
It was a stallion trampling the skies
To rags of thunder with his glittering shoes,
It was a childish god with lazy eyes,
It was an indolent and reckless Muse.

More than all this, it was a spirit apart,
Purely of fire and air and the mind.
No fear could eat the temper from its heart
Nor any fleshly bandage make it blind.
It was a broken lightning in the blast.
It was the first of youth, and it has passed.

I left it in a bare and windy street
Between two sets of bells whose casual chimes
Answer each other, janglingly and sweet,
Like the concord of long-repeated rhymes.
I left it in a since-demolished bar,
And underneath a rain-streaked paving-stone
And, men and things being what they are,
The hidden ghost had better couch alone.

I shall not rattle with an iron fist
The relics, scattered into sticks of chalk,
Of what was once the carcass of a hawk
That sat like Wrath on an archangel's wrist.
Nor disinter, to make my house look smart,
That thunder-broken and ferocious heart.

Men that dig up a mandrake know dis-ease.
This body is committed to its bones
Down where the taproots of New England trees
Suck bare existence from the broken stones.
All summer cannot quicken it with heat,
Nor Spring perturb it with a budding bough,
Nor all the glittering devils of the sleet
In snowing Winter rack its quiet now.

But, in October, when the apples fall,
And leaves begin to rust before the cold,
There may occur, by some unnoticed wall,
A sigh, a whisper in the rotten gold.
A breath that hardly can be called a breath
From Death that will not yet acknowledge Death.

Unnoticed — for the years have hardier tasks
Than listening to a whisper or a sigh.
They creep among us with a bag of masks
And fit them to our brows obsequiously.
Some are of iron, to affront the gay,
And some of bronze, to satirize the brave,
But most are merely a compost of clay
Cut in the sleepy features of a slave.

With such astuteness do they counterfeit
We do not realize the masks are on
Till, gaudy in our folly, bit by bit
We notice that a neighbor's face seems drawn.
And then, with fingers turned to lumps of stone,
Touch the inhuman cast that was our own.

There is no doubt such workmanship is sage,
The bound and ordered skies could not abide
A creature formed of elemental rage
For longer than a moment of its pride.
The hand that stooped to Adam from the cloud
And touched his members with a fiery spine
Designed as well the pattern of the shroud
That should convince him he was not divine.

And there are sorceries more excellent
Than the first conflagration of the dust,
But none are quite so single in intent
Or unsophisticated with distrust.
The ripened fruit is golden to the core.
But an enchantment fosters it no more.

Therefore, in neither anguish nor relief,
I offer to the shadow in the air
No image of a monumental grief
To mock its transience from a stony chair,
Nor any tablets edged in rusty black.
Only a branch of maple, gathered high
When the crisp air first tastes of applejack,
And the blue smokes of Autumn stain the sky.

A branch whose leaves cling to the withering staff
Like precious toys of gilt and scarlet paint,
An emblem Life and Death share half-and-half,
A brittle sceptre for a dying saint.
Unburning fire, an insubstantial Host,
A sleeping cloud, a beauty of the ghost.

So much in memory. For the future, this.
The checker-boarded house of Day and Night
Is but a cavern where a swallow flies
To beat its wings an instant at the light
And then depart, where the incessant storm

Shepherds the planets like a drunken nurse.
It does not need an everlasting form
To dignify an ecstasy so terse.

But while the swallow fluttered and was quick
I have marked down its passage in the dark,
And charred its image on a broken stick
With the weak flame of an uncertain spark.
The fire can have it now, the rain can rain on it,
And the ice harden like a god's disdain on it.

JOHN V. A. WEAVER (1893-)

This young poet's books of verse are three, *In American* (Knopf, 1921); *Finders* (Knopf, 1923); and *To Youth* (Knopf, 1928). He was born in North Carolina, and went to school in Chicago. His later education was completed at Hamilton College and at Harvard. After graduation he went into newspaper work on the *Chicago Daily News*, was a Second Lieutenant in the Army during the Great War, and, from 1920 to 1924, was literary editor of the *Brooklyn Eagle*. His wife is Peggy Wood, who has attained fame upon the stage. They have a son, David.

Years ago Wallace Irwin experimented in contemporary slang in the *Love Sonnets of a Hoodlum*, a delightful and original thing in its day. Weaver, much later, decided to write in the ordinary American language, in the vernacular — consequently, the title of his first book. His was the knowledge and command of a later street speech than that known to Irwin. And his has been a different intention. Irwin desired merely to amuse. Weaver has entered into the hearts of the characters he makes speak with a deep sympathy that occasionally carries him into sentimentality. He is entirely serious. And while he does not always write in the

patois, it is in that language that he is most effective. His best prose is to be found in a novel published in 1928, *Her Knight Comes Riding*. The story is of very ordinary people, the theme as old as the world, but Weaver's ability to reproduce colloquial conversation with almost phonographic exactitude, is a genuine gift.

In his best poems, as H. L. Mencken has said, Weaver "opens the way for a ballad literature in America, representative of true Americans and the American dialect," because he knows the common people of the country, the real masses, as few contemporaries know them, and can set down their own, actual, small — and how mammoth to them — delights and dreams and tribulations in their own tongue.

LEGEND

I WONDER where it could of went to;
  I know I seen it just as plain:
A beautiful, big fairy city
  Shinin' through the rain.

Rain it was, not snow — in winter!
  Special-order April weather
Ticklin' at our two faces
  Pressed up close together.

Not a single soul was near us
  Standin' out there on the bow;
When we passed another ferry
  He says, sudden, "Now!"

Then I looked where he was pointin'. . . .
  I seen a magic city rise. . . .
Gleamin' windows, like when fields is
  Full of fire-flies.

Towers an' palaces in the clouds, like,
Real as real, but nice and blurred.
"Oh!" I starts in — but he wispers
"Hush! Don't say a word!

"Don't look long, and don't ast questions,
Elset you make the fairies sore.
They won't let you even see it
Never any more.

"Don't you try to ever go there —
It's to dream of, not to find.
Lovely things like that is always
Mostly in your mind."

Somethin' made me say, "It's Jersey!" . . .
Somethin' mean. . . . He hollers, "Hell!
Now you done it, sure as shootin',
Now you bust the spell!"

Sure enough, the towers and castles
Went like lightnin' out of sight. . . .
Nothin' there but filthy Jersey
On a drizzly night.

MARK VAN DOREN (1894–)

Mark Van Doren teaches English at Columbia and has been literary editor of *The Nation*, in New York, since 1920. His elder brother is Carl Van Doren, the well-known critic. Mark Van Doren's own first excursions were in criticism, as his *Henry David Thoreau, A Critical Study*, published in 1916, and his *The Poetry of John Dryden*, published in 1920, attest. The younger Van Doren was born in Illinois and educated at the University of Illinois and at Columbia University. He

first presented himself as a poet in *Spring Thunder* (A. & C. Boni), which was published in 1924, though many of the poems included had appeared prior to that in various magazines.

Van Doren is a poet of the countryside. In the summer he lives upon a farm of his own in Cornwall, Connecticut. He is a natural inquiring student of nature at first hand. In reading his work the work of Robert Frost naturally comes to mind for comparison, but after the comparison is made, the work of Van Doren is seen to preserve its own individuality. Here is unobtrusive writing, but clear, clean workmanship embodying genuine meditation. He has followed his first volume with several others, consolidating his position as a bucolic poet of unusual gifts and as a shrewd philosophic commentator on life.

THE TRANSLATION

Ant and shrew
And marmot, going
Safely there,
The time of mowing

Comes tomorrow.
Meadow lark
And banded snake,
Then the dark

Sky will fall —
What is green
Above you now
No more be seen.

What is single
Will divide.
And as you run
The other side

Of all the world
Will drop its blue
As if it looked
For none but you.

Toad and cricket,
Worm and mouse,
You will find
Another house

That not a hand
Was here to build.
My own sky
Has never spilled,

Right and left,
And shown a new one.
Night and day
Mine is the true one —

Would it were not,
And could lie
Thus to the sickle
As I die.

SAMUEL HOFFENSTEIN

Samuel Hoffenstein, who was born in Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania, established his reputation as a writer of saturnine verse, the most characteristic of it being idiomatic, with the publication in 1928 of his *Poems in Praise of Practically Nothing*. A former volume, now a collector's rarity, *Life Sings a Song*, had appeared in 1916. The following year Mr. Hoffenstein appeared as co-author of *The Broadway Anthology*. He was educated in the public schools of Wilkesbarre and graduated from Lafayette College. After that he both directed a

public school in Wilkesbarre and was associated with the *Wilkesbarre Times-Leader*. He came to New York in 1922, covered the theater for the *New York Evening Sun* and ran a column called "The Dome" in the *New York Tribune* book section. He then became widely known as chief publicity director for all A. H. Woods's theatrical productions.

Poems in Praise of Practically Nothing is a brilliant *mélange* of lighter verse mingling comedy with tragedy, notable for individuality and technical accomplishment. One brief section, *Interlude for a Solitary Flute*, deserts the modern Horatian strain for greater heights. It is from this section that we have chosen *Sorrow that Cries* — which proves Mr. Hoffenstein's genuine and fundamental lyricism.

SORROW THAT CRIES —

Sorrow that cries
Like a wind on water,
Is still of Eve
A natural daughter.

For a man may lie
With her, and she
Will give herself unto him
Utterly.

For Sorrow's a woman
A Man may take
And know, till his heart
And body break.

Sorrow, that cries
Like the windy waters,
May bear him sons,
And bear him daughters;

Heirs of substance,
And heirs of breath —
Hope and Dream,
And even Death;

Power and Tears,
And Prayer and Faith,
Strength and Song —
And even Death.

But Joy is a sylph
In the winter air,
That cracks his name
With the whips of her hair.

For a man may lie
With her, and she
Elude and flee him
Utterly: —

Body to body,
A hell apart,
With her laugh in his brain
And her loss in his heart.

And she will bear him
This bastard twain —
The monster, Fear
And the hunchback, Pain.

A man may lie
With her, and she
Leave in his arms
The salt of the sea;

A knife in his heart,
And drouth on his breath,

Terror and Pain —
But never, Death.

But Sorrow, that cries
Like a wind on water,
Is still of Eve
A natural daughter.

For a man may lie
With her, and she
Will give herself unto him
Utterly,

Till the sun's red thunder,
The night's black drum
Cease, and his love
His peace become.

GEORGE O'NEIL (1898–)

O'Neil is a poet who has progressed remarkably in eight years. His first book, *The Cobbler in Willow Street*, published at the age of twenty-one, was thin indeed compared to the magic of *The White Rooster* (Boni & Liveright), 1927. This is one of the few volumes of recent verse by a young man (for O'Neil is but just thirty) that merits high praise. The poet has perfected his technique, and hardly anything that he attempts in this volume goes wrong. The poems are as dazzling and sharp-edged as ice-splinters.

O'Neil comes from St. Louis, Missouri. He now lives in New York. He has this year (1928) produced a remarkable first novel of old St. Louis, *That Bright Heat*. In poetry he may be said to have definitely "arrived"; in prose he gives great promise.

THE WHITE ROOSTER

Ah, God! To have a breast like that
To throw at day,
Thrust for the hands of dawn
To quiver and flare upon.

And a hook of gold to end you,
And a bloody flag sewn in your head,
And all yourself an arch,
And your soul a white cascade.

With yellow spirals,
Step, step, stalk,
And clutch reluctant loam,
Hard kernels and brown hens
In the brazen blue of noon.

Ah, God! Stab upward with your noise;
Tear at the sky.
With the day gone molten down his throat
And his spine a tilted flame,
What singer could not make one song
As fine as fire?

GARDEN INCIDENT

The noon-enameled bees
Beset the passive clover.
But say no more of this.
The green chameleons hiss:
The pool is brimming over.

Through yew interstices
Deer foal with coral eyes
Stand carven in surprise.
The hound that runs alone
Has turned himself to stone.

The urns upon the wall
That let the water fall
Have whispered, dripped, desisted.
The basin that was wide
Has narrowed on a side,
The marble edge has twisted.
Across its broken lip
The burnished fishes slip.
A black and golden gush
Flares out into a brush
That streaks the stone with sun.

Soon, now, this will be done.
The dark lagoon will dry
And give the leaning sky
Its deepest word to guess,
The full of emptiness

Soon, now, this will be done.
Chameleons will be grey.
The deer will go away.
The lonely hound will run.

PHELPS PUTNAM (1894–)

This one of our younger poets has spent the last thirteen years in striving to realize his own ideals as to poetic form and content. His first and, as yet, his only small book, *Trinc* (Doubleday, Doran), taking its odd title from the magic word revealed to those in pursuit of the Holy Bottle, as narrated by Rabelais, immediately confronted the reader with an intelligence of virile originality.

Born in Boston, H. Phelps Putnam was educated at Phillips-Exeter and at Yale. Since graduation he has worked (*a*) in the engineer's office of a copper mine at Bisbee, Arizona; (*b*) in a foreign trading firm in New

York City; (*c*) in what he terms "the bureaucracy" at Washington, D.C.; (*d*) in the office of a foundry and machine company in the Naugatuck Valley in Connecticut, and lastly upon the editorial staff of The Atlantic Monthly Press, book publishers. He has also lived in Colorado, New Hampshire, and France.

Beyond question, Putnam is one of the most promising younger poets appearing in America within the last ten years. His method is, in a number of his poems, impressively individual. He is a deep ironist, staring bleakly through the shams of life — loving the fellowship of men and their ribaldry; but consecrated also to the pursuit of beauty and nobility in the midst of outrage and human suffering.

BALLAD OF A STRANGE THING

I

His name was Chance, Jack Chance, he said
And that his family was dead.
He was a lucid fool, his eyes
Were cool and he beyond surprise.
Into the township Pollard Mill
He came in autumn alone one day,
Loafing along those roads which still,
Though dying in the grass, report
That lumber-sledges went that way.
He came idly and in our town
He raised a flight of birds, a brown
And silver flock, and underneath
Their wings were tinged with gold; his breath
Blew and the birds dipped and rose
As if they surely lived which were
But lies of the calm sorcerer.

Autumn came bringing free
Melancholy, but to me

Brought Jack, when I was sitting there
In the open barn door-way where
The sun moved in and I could get
Drifting by the sound and smell
Of late bees and of mignonette
From the dying garden by the wall,
And hear the thin defeated bell
Of distant time, and see the tall
Elms beyond the orchard slopes
Rising improbably, like hopes
Swaying above the mind, and I
Was sitting there and he came by.
Under his hat I saw his eyes
Measuring without disguise
The ripeness of my house,
And measuring myself, and he
Turned in and approached and spoke to me.
He had decided undismayed
This was the place for Chance, and I
The boy for him; and so he stayed.

And then the days moved gravely by,
Time drowned in fluent clarity
Flowing between him and me,
Who only lay along the walls
Unshamed of indolence, and heard
The dusty harvesters' harsh calls
To sweating teams, loading the sheaves
On the steep withered fields — their care
Was none of ours; or reasoned there
Where the mill-pond burned with leaves
And rustled at the dam, on those
Stark thoughts that rose
Out of cool spoken words, or we
Loafing in the arbor ate
Slowly the warm grapes, the rusty
Creaking swallows skimmed

The long ridgepoles, the day grew late
Easily, and dimmed.

At night we made a fire to mark
A spot of mirth against the dark,
There in a pasture which lay high
On the nearness of the sky.
Other countrymen would come,
Young farmers, farmers' men and sons,
One after one they learned to come
And laugh with Chance and tap the old
Keg of cider, acrid gold,
Which we had borne carefully
Out of the cellar where it lay,
Drowsing wickedly it lay,
Waiting for us to set free
Its vigour and its treachery.
Then Jack would sing his bawdy songs:
That old ballad which belongs
To timelessness, *The Bastard King*,
Or *Doctor Tanner*, or *Mademoiselle*,
Or *Lil* who died of lechering.
She died with her boots on, as they tell,
With a champion lad between her knees.
Or he would sometimes please,
If drinking brought delusion near,
To tell corrosive tales, the mere
Garments of lies, the cunning kind
Which echo somewhat in the mind,
And then they go, and you are more
Dull and baffled than before.

There went by then, in such a way,
Serene October; the last day
Came and the night was newly cold,
But the fire was high and the old
Cider burned within and we,

A dozen foolish farmers, kept
Alive the late hilarity
Of autumn, and the township slept.
Then Chance arose from where he sat
Against the keg and cocked his hat
Sideways and walking slow around
The fire, said — "I have always found
Nothing new among much change;
But this I tell you now is strange —

2

It was at noon, the hour of sleep
For those who use their nights
In the deluding piracy
Of shadowy delights.

And so I slept, above the bank
Above the River Still,
Under an oak, the least of two
That rose under the hill.

But a sound crept through my nerves
And I woke and I could hear
Feet running fast and close,
Down the hill and near,

Then stop; and heard a noise like sobs
And stood up quietly
And peering saw that a breathless girl
Was clutching the other tree.

And then a man came following,
Loping leisurely,
And when he stood beside her said,
'I knew you would wait for me.'

And then she turned at bay; she was
Astonishingly rare,

A young ascetic fury she
Was something almost strange to me
With her honey fallen hair.

'Yes — and have waited even too long,
Before now, to be glad,
Watching your insolence too long —
Oh, you were the gorgeous lad
With your dark lovely face and all
The women you have had.

I have seen the rabbits follow you
Unasked and eagerly;
O, ladies, you should see him now,
Begging a kiss of me.'

She ceased, and we all three were still
While he admired her,
And I kept hidden watching them,
For I have that character.

He did not mock her when he spoke,
'Where do they get these dull
Flash melodramas in their skulls?
And such a dainty skull.

Listen, I keep no list of names
For vanity; and I
Dislike the names and the odors and ways
Of women; I am shy
Of their domestic wills; and I
Am tired of the melting lie.

But there you are — and sometimes love
Is more than remembered skill.'
'Love,' she said, 'is the rust which ate
The clean rancour of my will.'

He raised his quiet hand to touch
Her hair, but she
Turned sharply down the bank and he
Now followed instantly.

And there below the godly stream
Was whispering in its beard,
And she cried, 'Save me, River Still!'
Then stepped and disappeared.

Well — so far nothing strange;
But after that the queer
Began, and I have seen these things,
And I, the bastard son of change,
Would dare to call them queer.

I saw the girl had gone entirely,
And in her place a dry
Shivering graceful sheaf of reeds
Sprang up, suddenly high;

And that he, following so close
That her hair was in his face,
Clutched and had no girl but had
Sharp reeds in his embrace.

He stepped back, looking at his hands
All laced with blood; a spike
Broke short and stood between his ribs
Most murderous like.

This feller was not eager now,
But only dazed,
And pulled the wet spike from his side,
Fumbling and amazed.

He stooped slowly to bathe his hands,
Then from his pocket drew

A folded knife and cut one reed,
Murmuring, 'This will do.

Sometimes there's music in these girls,
Sometimes,' and sitting then
He made a whistle which he tried
And changed and tried again.

He blew five even notes and stopped,
But the sound rippled away
Slowly, as if a sweet clang came
From the leaves and hummed away.

And then there came along the bank
A black majestic goat
With yellow eyes and gilded horns
And a white beard at its throat.

The goat lay down before his feet
Respectfully, dipping its head,
And the man laughed and, 'Can this be
A messenger?' he said.

And played again and now more wild
And cloudily intricate,
And the goat arose and danced like one
Hieratic and sedate.

3

— And that is all," said Chance, and then
He said, "So long," and walked away
Casually, as if the night were day,
And we jumped up calling, and then
Stood silent for over us coldly fell
Five piercing notes, each like a spark;
We stood there stiffly and immersed,
Hearing laughter in the dark,

Until I spoke, being the first,
"We had better go home now to bed,
We have drunk too much," I said.

Thereafter the rains beat down
The autumn, the drenched leaves came down
From the black trees, choking the ditches,
And over the sea came sons-of-bitches
With a hollow quarrel, the talking rats
Of England and of Europe slithered
Down the hawsers, doffed their hats
And squealed; and the plague spread and came,
Taking the cleanly name
Of honor for its strange device,
Even to our town; the conscript lice
Played soldiers over Pollard Mill
And pitched their camp on the River Still;
But no more Jack, and we were more
Dull and baffled than before.

GEORGE DILLON (1906–)

At the age of twenty-two, and with his first book, *Boy in the Wind* (Viking Press), George Dillon has demonstrated the possession of a most rare talent. He is naturally and extraordinarily gifted. He was born in Jacksonville, Florida (although one thinks of him as a young Chicago poet), and is a descendant on his mother's side from an old Kentucky family, and on his father's from a long line of Georgia preachers and physicians. He received his primary education in Louisville and St. Louis. In 1923 he entered the University of Chicago and began his career as a poet in a group previously including the notable novelists, Glenway Wescott and Elizabeth Madox Roberts.

At Chicago University, Dillon founded a magazine

called *The Forge*, which is still being successfully published. In 1925 he was awarded the John Billings Fisk Prize for the best poetry written by a student of the University. He also received the Young Poets' Prize given by *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, and shortly after became Associate Editor of that magazine under Miss Harriet Monroe. He graduated from Chicago University in 1927 and is now employed in an advertising firm.

THE HARD LOVERS

Now austere lips are laid
Sternly on lips: implicit
In each bold body, dread
Of the outrageous visit.

As wind in a tall tide
Flooding the frantic trees,
Love, long withheld by pride,
Breaks coldly over these.

Their heritage is peace;
They root in a strong languor:
Like wind-assaulted trees
They bend in terrible anger.

They coldly clash: if either
Yields any tenderness
It is that they together
Share deeply one distress.

LOUISE BOGAN (1897–)

Miss Bogan, now the wife of Raymond Holden, also a poet, comes from Maine and was educated in New England schools. She lives in New York. Her first

volume, and so far her only one (though subsequent poems of hers have appeared, particularly in *The New Republic*), was *Body of this Death* (McBride, 1923). Of late she has written commentary for *The New Republic*.

Miss Bogan's work is remarkable for its exactness of expression. It has clenched restraint, and the curling lip is often evident. It is the work of a meticulous craftswoman, close-knit — at first glance, perhaps, difficult, but usually rewarding strict attention. There is no doubt concerning this poet's distinction. Her work is of the new feminine precision first displayed by Elinor Wylie; but no other practitioner has succeeded in being more than an echo while Miss Bogan has retained her own individuality.

MEDUSA

I HAD come to the house, in a cave of trees,
Facing a sheer sky.
Everything moved, — a bell hung ready to strike,
Sun and reflection wheeled by.

When the bare eyes were before me
And the hissing hair,
Held up at a window, seen through a door.
The stiff bald eyes, the serpents on the forehead
Formed in the air.

This is a dead scene forever now.
Nothing will ever stir.
The end will never brighten it more than this,
Nor the rain blur.

The water will always fall, and will not fall,
And the tipped bell make no sound.
The grass will always be growing for hay
Deep on the ground.

And I shall stand here like a shadow
Under the great balanced day,
My eyes on the yellow dust that was lifting in the wind,
And does not drift away.

MEN LOVED WHOLLY BEYOND WISDOM

Men loved wholly beyond wisdom
Have the staff without the banner.
Like a fire in a dry thicket
Rising within women's eyes
Is the love men must return.
Heart, so subtle now, and trembling,
What a marvel to be wise,
To love never in this manner!
To be quiet in the fern
Like a thing gone dead and still,
Listening to the prisoned cricket
Shake its terrible, dissembling
Music in the granite hill.

GENEVIEVE TAGGARD (1894–)

Miss Taggard spent her youth in Hawaii, where her father was a school superintendent. She left at the age of twenty. She graduated from the University of California in 1919. In New York, on coming East, she was one of the founders of *The Measure*, a small poetry magazine. *For Eager Lovers*, her first book, was published in 1922. Her second book, *Words for the Chisel* (Knopf), followed in 1926. In San Francisco was published in 1923 a thin sheaf of childhood memories, *Hawaiian Hilltop*. Miss Taggard also chose and edited in 1925, *May Days. An Anthology of Verse from Masses-Liberator.* She likewise helped to edit the California anthology, *Continent's End.* She has contributed

poems and prose sketches to many periodicals. Of late she has done much rather drastic critical work. Her selected poems have lately been published by Knopf.

Genevieve Taggard's poems are uneven in merit, but her best is striking. She has considerable narrative power, a fresh lyrical gift, and much insight. Hers also is a sturdy independence. She likes free swinging rhythms, though she can also step at a graver pace. Her imagination can flare remarkably, as in *Ice Age*. She does not seem as yet to have come to the fullest expression of her powers, but her range is decidedly interesting.

THE ENAMEL GIRL

Fearful of beauty, I always went
Timidly indifferent;

Dainty, hesitant, taking in
Just what was tiniest and thin;

Careful not to care
For burning beauty in blue air;

Wanting what my hand could touch —
That not too much;

Looking not to left nor right
On a honey-silent night;

Fond of arts and trinkets, if
Imperishable and stiff,

They never played me false, nor fell
Into fine dust. They lasted well.

They lasted till you came, and then
When you went sufficed again.

But for you, they had been quite
All I needed for my sight.

You faded. I never knew
How to unfold as flowers do,

Or how to nourish anything
To make it grow. I wound a wing

With one caress, with one kiss
Break most fragile ecstasies. . . .

Now terror touches me when I
Dream I am touching a butterfly.

ERUPTION IN UTOPIA

There'll be a glassy paradise
Where all will have their crowns of ice,
And all will wear their robes of snow;
And the trees will bow, and the winds will blow —
And men will falter to and fro.

Men will prowl like timid beasts
Hungry after a hundred feasts
And break the bracken down in the woods,
Crash and fret and gaze and spy —
And look for nothing, low and high.

Then they will shiver and go to sleep.

To sleep, to sleep, and toss and sigh —
Sprawled they will mutter where they lie,
And sit up rigid, and wonder why.

They seem to stretch and never wake:
There is a glaze they cannot break

To the world outside, or the inner eye;
Oh, how they cry and cannot ache,
Oh, how they try and cannot weep, —
And there's nothing to do but shiver and sleep

This weight of nothingness is more
Than any planet stood before:
Shades and empty clouds will gather
Tons of fret in weight of weather,
Till under the burden of this lack
Obeisant earth will warp and crack
Open a wound to bleed them terror.

Lava, lava. Slow and thick
Earth oozes, shudders and is sick.

How they will gape at the molten stone,
Take earth's illness for their own,
And groan. . . .

There they will stand, stormed by pain,
The obscene flood, the lewd stain.

Across the glassy zones of ice
Comes the long writhe and the slow hiss,
Sluggish red, the fire's kiss —
Snaky mark in paradise.

And who is this delivers them?
The serpent, yea, the very same
Who was their doom and shame.

Cast down your haughty diadem,
Your paradisal diadem,
Into the lava flame.

Now all the pent-up rivers run
In headlong silence under sun;

And miracle, O, miracle,
The silver fluid in their veins
Is moving in a miracle:

In them their own volcanoes seethe,
And their bright bodies breathe. . . .

And fixedly as in a spell
They watch the serpent writhe and wreathe
Over the earth and on to smite
The glassy sea — and the marble, white
Stone sea uplifts a mist of light.

O, what marvels they behold:
The mountains settling fold on fold,
Cliffs that melt and rivers gold,
And mists like angels rising slowly,
Singing holy, holy, holy.

They are not souls, but flesh at last,
And the rent earth, under the ice,
Dearer than any paradise —
Into the sea their crowns they cast,
Into the air go up their cries,
With joy they rend their snowy guise;

And now they wait, transfixed with awe,
By the white sea — by the red flaw. . . .

ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH (1893–)

Fox Footprints, Miss Coatsworth's first volume, published in 1921, was not particularly memorable, but three years later, in *Atlas and Beyond* (Harper), she demonstrated unusual gifts. Since then she has steadily improved, till to-day she stands as one of our most

accomplished women poets. The subjects she chooses seem infinite in variety, whether she picks them from other times or other climes, gives us a glimpse of homely New England, or merely accomplishes a foliated decoration or a snap-shot of prowling horror. She can be bizarre, macabre, or strongly realistic, and usually she writes with admirable skill.

She was born in Buffalo, New York, has traveled a great deal, and is at home either on the Atlantic or Pacific Coasts. She has given us some vivid pictures of the Southwest. Her observation is always on the alert and personages out of books come alive for her. A delightful and versatile writer, who may yet produce something of major importance.

ALL GOATS

All goats have a wild-brier grace
They are as elegant as thorns
With little bells beneath their chins
And pointed horns.

So quick are they upon their feet,
So light and gaily do they prance
Their hoofs seem sportive castanets
To which they dance.

And as they raise sagacious heads
Disturbed by some crude passer-by
They gaze upon him with a most
Satiric eye.

SONG OF THE THREE SEEDS IN THE MACAW'S BEAK

Cracked by that accurate beak,
Turned by that rubbery tongue,

This is the final song
The first seed sung:

By no inner instinct
Is my core stirred,
Forced to the light
By this gaudy bird.

A taste on the tongue,
A fraction of power,
Am I who might be
A tall sun-flower!

Cracked by that accurate beak,
Turned by that rubbery tongue,
This is the final song
The second seed sung:

In direct descent
With no single break
From the first sun-flower
My line I take.

Dull duplication!
Is this not best?
To add to the bloom
Of a scarlet crest?

Cracked by that accurate beak,
Turned by that rubbery tongue,
This is the final song
The third seed sung:

Whether grown great,
By one's own law —
Or submerged to a fraction
Of red macaw,

We return to the nothing
From which we came.
To me at least
It is much the same!

Cracked by that accurate beak,
Turned by that rubbery tongue
These are the final songs
The three seeds sung. 40

DOROTHY PARKER (1893–)

Dorothy Parker, born Rothschild in West End, New Jersey, received her education at Miss Dana's School in Morristown and at the Blessed Sacrament Convent in New York City. Some ten years ago she was on the editorial staff of *Vogue*, and from 1917 to 1920 she acted as dramatic critic upon *Vanity Fair*. More recently she has furnished weekly comment upon books, often exceedingly sharp in attack, but always highly amusing, to the "New Yorker." She is, however, chiefly a free-lance writer for humorous publications. Her early *Hymns of Hate* appeared in *Life*, and immediately attracted attention. Much of her later poetry was published in the famous "Conning Tower" of Franklin P. Adams, in the *New York World*. Her first collection of her verse, *Enough Rope* (Boni & Liveright), appeared in 1927 and at once entered the ranks of "best sellers" in poetry. A second volume, *Sunset Gun*, was later issued by the same firm.

Dorothy Parker is a wit of the first order. She combines, extraordinarily, a charming, quiet grace of manner and an affectionate nature, with a ruthlessly sardonic intelligence and an impish delight in ribaldry. Her verse partakes of both sides of her temperament. She can write deftly a genuinely beautiful and moving

lyric or twist the ironies of life and love into brilliant outrageous darts that go singing to the mark. She is represented in this collection by examples displaying both sides of her dual gift. No one has written more "modern" verse with a keener edge. But the born poet often ousts the devilishly clever commentator. She has also written, with quick observation and an unerring ear for colloquial speech, prose dialogues that present richly the tragi-comedy of ordinary love-making.

SOMEBODY'S SONG

This is what I vow;
He shall have my heart to keep;
Sweetly will we stir and sleep,
All the years, as now.
Swift the measured sands may run;
Love like this is never done;
He and I are welded one:
This is what I vow.

This is what I pray:
Keep him by me tenderly;
Keep him sweet in pride of me,
Ever and a day;
Keep me from the old distress;
Let me, for our happiness,
Be the one to love the less:
This is what I pray.

This is what I know:
Lovers' oaths are thin as rain;
Love's a harbinger of pain —
Would it were not so!
Ever is my heart a-thirst,
Ever is my love accurst;
He is neither last nor first —
This is what I know.

RÉSUMÉ

Razors pain you;
Rivers are damp;
Acids stain you;
And drugs cause cramp.
Guns aren't lawful;
Nooses give;
Gas smells awful;
You might as well live.

PART V

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER (1886–)

Fletcher was one of the original American imagists. He has lived for a long time in London, and his later and most powerful work is decidedly not imagistic. He began with rather thin experiments in 1913, five small books of poems all published in one year. *Irradiations — Sand and Spray*, two years later, presented the exotic fruits of unrestrained fancy. In 1916 Fletcher was writing color symphonies. He wrote in free verse, invented what he called "polyphonic prose," experimented with language for its own sake. His poems of much more human interest came later. *Breakers and Granite* (Macmillan), published in 1921, is one of the strongest of his books. It was followed by a gathering together of the best of his earlier work in *Preludes and Symphonies* (1922). His latest achievement has been the remarkable long biblical interpretations in *Branches of Adam* (Faber & Gwyer: London). Fletcher might be called a passionate pessimist. He started as a virtuoso merely, but has steadily grown in power to interpret life. He came from Arkansas originally and was educated at Andover and Harvard. Since the early imagist days he has lived in entire detachment from any group. He has preserved extreme artistic integrity. Though he has lived so long in another country, many of his poems give us striking pictures of the west and south of the United States; and his poem on Lincoln shows how rootedly American is his mind. He has written in a great variety of free rhythms.

ARIZONA POEMS

WINDMILLS[1]

The windmills, like great sunflowers of steel,
Lift themselves proudly over the straggling houses;
And at their feet the deep blue-green alfalfa
Cuts the desert like the stroke of a sword.

Yellow melon flowers
Crawl beneath the withered peach-trees;
A date-palm throws its heavy fronds of steel
Against the scoured metallic sky.

The houses, doubled-roofed for coolness,
Cower amid the manzanita scrub.
A man with jingling spurs
Walks heavily out of a vine-bowered doorway,
Mounts his pony, rides away.

The windmills stare at the sun.
The yellow earth cracks and blisters.
Everything is still.

In the afternoon
The wind takes dry waves of heat and tosses them,
Mingled with dust, up and down the streets,
Against the belfry with its green bells:

And, after sunset, when the sky
Becomes a green and orange fan,
The windmills, like great sunflowers on dried stalks,
Stare hard at the sun they cannot follow.

Turning, turning, forever turning
In the chill night-wind that sweeps over the valley,

[1] From John Gould Fletcher, *Breakers and Granite*. Copyright, 1921, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

With the shriek and the clank of the pumps groaning
beneath them,
And the choking gurgle of tepid water.

MEXICAN QUARTER[1]

By an alley lined with tumble-down shacks
And street-lamps askew, half-sputtering,
Feebly glimmering on gutters choked with filth and dogs
Scratching their mangy backs:
Half-naked children are running about,
Women puff cigarettes in black doorways,
Crickets are crying.
Men slouch sullenly
Into the shadows:
Behind a hedge of cactus,
The smell of a dead horse
Mingles with the smell of tamales frying.

And a girl in a black lace shawl
Sits in a rickety chair by the square of an unglazed
window,
And sees the explosion of the stars
Softly poised on a velvet sky.
And she is humming to herself: —
"Stars, if I could reach you,
(You are so very clear that it seems as if I could reach
you)
I would give you all to Madonna's image,
On the grey-plastered altar behind the paper flowers,
So that Juan would come back to me,
And we could live again those lazy burning hours
Forgetting the tap of my fan and my sharp words.
And I would only keep four of you,
Those two blue-white ones overhead,
To hang in my ears;

[1] From John Gould Fletcher, *Breakers and Granite*. Copyright, 1921, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

And those two orange ones yonder,
To fasten on my shoe-buckles."

A little further along the street
A man sits stringing a brown guitar.
The smoke of his cigarette curls round his head,
And he, too, is humming, but other words:
"Think not that at your window I wait;
New love is better, the old is turned to hate.
Fate! Fate! All things pass away;
Life is forever, youth is for a day.
Love again if you may
Before the stars are blown out of the sky
And the crickets die;
Babylon and Samarkand
Are mud walls in a waste of sand."

RAIN IN THE DESERT[1]

The huge red-buttressed mesa over yonder
Is merely a far-off temple where the sleepy sun is burning
Its altar-fires of pinyon and of toyon for the day.

The old priests sleep, white-shrouded,
Their pottery whistles lie beside them, the prayer-sticks closely feathered
On every mummied face there glows a smile.

The sun is rolling slowly
Beneath the sluggish folds of the sky-serpents,
Coiling, uncoiling, blue-black, sparked with fires.

The old dead priests
Feel in the thin dried earth that is heaped about them,
Above the smell of scorching oozing pinyon,
The acrid smell of rain.

[1] From John Gould Fletcher, *Breakers and Granite*. Copyright, 1921, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

And now the showers
Surround the mesa like a troop of silver dancers:
Shaking their rattles, stamping, chanting, roaring,
Whirling, extinguishing the last red wisp of light.

CLOUDS ACROSS THE CANYON[1]

Shadows of clouds
March across the canyon,
Shadows of blue hands passing
Over a curtain of flame.

Clutching, staggering, upstriking,
Darting in blue-black fury,
To where pinnacles, green and orange,
Await.

The winds are battling and striving to break them:
Thin lightnings spit and flicker,
The peaks seem a dance of scarlet demons
Flitting amid the shadows.

Grey rain-curtains wave afar off,
Wisps of vapour curl and vanish.
The sun throws soft shafts of golden light
Over rose-buttressed palisades.

Now the clouds are a lazy procession;
Blue balloons bobbing solemnly
Over black-dappled walls,

Where rise sharp-fretted, golden-roofed cathedrals
Exultantly, and split the sky with light.

[1] From John Gould Fletcher, *Breakers and Granite.* Copyright, 1921, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

THE BLACK ROCK

To Thomas Hardy

I

Off the long headland, threshed about by round-backed breakers,
There is a black rock, standing high at the full tide;
Off the headland there is emptiness,
And the moaning of the ocean,
And the black rock standing alone.

In the orange wake of sunset,
When the gulls have fallen silent,
And the winds slip out and meet together from the edges of the sea,
Settled down in the dark water,
Fragment of the earth abandoned,
Ragged and huge the black rock stands.

It is as if it listened,
Stood and listened very intently
To the everlasting swish and boom and kiss of spray,
Listened to the creeping-on of night;
While afar off, to the westward,
Dark clouds silently are packed together,
With a dull red glow between.

It is listening, it is lonely;
For the sunlight
Showed it houses near the headland,
Trees and flowers;
For the sunlight caused to grow upon it scanty blades of grass,
In the crannies of the rock,
Here and there;
For the sunlight brought it back remembrance of a world

Long rejected
And long lost;
Showed it white sails near the coast,
Children paddling in the bay,
Signs of life and kinship with mankind
Long forgot.
Now the sunset leaves it there,
Bare, rejected, a black scrap of rock,
Battered by the tides,
Wallowing in the sea.

Bleak, adrift,
Shattered like a monstrous ship of stone,
Left aground
By the waters, on its voyage;
With no foot to touch its deck,
With no hand to lift its sails,
There it stands.

II

Gulls wheel near it in the sunlight,
White backs flash;
Gray wings eddy, curl, are lifted, swept away,
On a wave;
Gulls pass rapidly in the sunlight
Round about it.

Gulls pass, screaming harshly to the wave-thrusts,
Laughing in uncanny voices;
Lonely flocks of great white birds,
Like to ghosts:

But the black rock does not welcome them,
Knows by heart already all their cries;
Hears, repeated, for the millionth millionth time
All the bitterness of ocean
Howling through their voices.

It still dreams of other things,
Of the cities and the fields,
And the lands near to the coast
Where the lonely grassy valleys
Full of dun herds deeply browsing,
Sweep in wide curves to the sea;

It still holds the memory
Of the wild bees booming, murmuring,
In the fields of thyme and clover,
And the shadows of broad trees
Towards noon:

It still lifts its huge scarred sides
Vainly to the burning glare of sun,
With the memory of doom
Thick upon them;
And the hope that by some fate
It may come once more to be
Part of all the earth it had;

Freed from clamor of the waves,
From the broken planks and wreckage
Drifting aimless here and there,
With the tides;
Freed to share its life with earth,
And to be a dwelling-place
For the outcast tribes of men,
Once again.

III

In the morning,
When the dark clouds whirl swift over,
From the southeast, dragging with them
Heavy curtains of gray rain,

The black rock rejoices.
All its little gullies drip with cool refreshing showers.
All the crannies, all the steeps,
All the meagre sheltered places
Fill with drip and tinkle of the rain.

But when the afternoon between the clouds
Leaves adrift cool patches of the sea,
Between floes of polar snow;

Then the rock is all aflame:
Diamond, emeralds, topazes,
Burn and shatter, and it seems
Like a garden filled with flowers.

Like a garden where the rapid wheeling lights
And black shadows lift and sway and fall;
Spring and summer and red autumn chase each other
Moment after moment, on its face.

So, till sunset
Lifts once more its lonely crimson torch,
Menacing and mournful, far away;
Then an altar left abandoned, it stands facing all the horizon
Where the light departs.

Massive black and crimson towers,
Cities carven by the wind from out the clouds of sunset look at it;
It has dreamed them, it has made this sacrifice,
Now it sees their rapid passing,
Soon it will be bleak and all alone.

IV

Abrupt and broken rock,
Black rock, awash in the midst of the waters,

Lonely, aloof, deserted,
Impotent to change;

Storm-clouds lift off,
The dawn strikes the hills far inland.
But you are forever tragic and apart,
Forever battling with the sea;

Till the waves have ground you to dust —
Till the ages are all accomplished,
Till you have relinquished the last reluctant fragment
To the gnawing teeth of the wave;

I know the force of your patience,
I have shared your grim silent struggle,
The mad dream you have, and will not abandon,
To cover your strength with gay flowers;

Keel of the world, apart,
I have lived like you.

Some men are soil of the earth;
Their lives are broad harvest fields
Green in the spring, and gold in their season,
Then barren and mown;

But those whom my soul has loved
Are bare rocks standing off headlands;
Cherishing, perhaps, a few bitter wild flowers,
That bloom in the granite, year after year.

ALFRED KREYMBORG (1883–)

KREYMBORG is one of the greatest eccentrics in modern poetry, though of recent years he has become a sonneteer. Still, even as a sonneteer his method is *sui generis*. Fifteen years ago he began the publication of

a small magazine called *Others* in which he sponsored the work of a group of radically experimental poets, later publishing their best efforts in a series of anthologies. He is a New Yorker born and has written engagingly of the older Greenwich Village in his biographical *Troubadour* (Boni & Liveright). He early became a chess enthusiast and expert and for a time even supported himself by teaching and demonstrating the art of chess. He has toured reciting his own work and playing on an instrument of his own invention known as a mandolute. He has written several volumes of brief, eccentric plays, and has aided in the production of his own puppet plays, for a volume of which no less a personage than Gordon Craig wrote the preface five years ago. Most recently he has given us a fantastic book for children, *Funnybone Alley*. His best later poetry appeared in *Less Lonely* in 1923.

This is enough to show the versatility of Alfred Kreymborg. He combines the mellow philosopher with the startling jester. He indulged in every kind of acrobatic experimentation in his early years as a poet and is now writing quite as originally in conventional forms. His early desire to eliminate completely all fustian and rhetoric from his poems caused him frequently to become too elliptical in statement. Even now one often has to give his work the closest attention to penetrate beneath surface obscurity. But Kreymborg has created an idiom of his own, and the personality conveyed in his best work is unusually ingratiating. He is the court jester of modern American poetry.

FESTOONS OF FISHES

Incognitos of masquerading moons
Refute the theories philosophers
Propound who blow their cheeks to fill balloons
And call their windy whims interpreters.

The swimming islands of the naked sun
Confound a telescope to ignorance
By dancing like oases on the run
Or delicate mirages in a trance.
The torrents of the sky reduce the earth,
A brittle stone, to powdered liquid sand;
Amuse themselves with slanting silver mirth
If hermits claim they've found the hidden hand.
Among the coral crypts that hold the sea
Festoons of fishes weave insanity.

PEEWEE

Is it a wish — that tiny tin whistle
Out on a leafless branch throwing a missile,

Wrapped in a dip and a lift, like a bow
Of rain turned somersault, curve down below:

Tip-dip-tipping a phrase and a blow,
Releasing a flute in a piccolo,

And striking an ear with a short, thin dart,
Pinning a secret one hides in a heart?

If it isn't a wish, why does it tarry?
If it wasn't fulfilled, how far did it carry?

Was it too stunted to be sentimental?
Or much too local to be continental?

CONRAD AIKEN (1889–)

A GEORGIAN by birth, Conrad Aiken is a graduate of Harvard, lived in Massachusetts for some years and repaired to England in 1921. He has since lived much on the Sussex coast. He started as a narrative poet

with *Earth Triumphant and Other Tales in Verse.* Although he contended that these poems had been written before the appearance in America of the work of Masefield, they appear at first reading to be quite similar in method. Two years later *Turns and Movies*, other narratives, now of the vaudeville stage, still bore but little trace of the Aiken that was to emerge. Psychoanalysis laid its rather too heavy hand upon *The Jig of Forslin.* Then came the weary symphonic movements of *Nocturne of Remembered Spring*, *The Charnel Rose*, and *The House of Dust.* The endeavor to bring poetry nearer to actual music in effect is Aiken's chief contribution to modern letters. But it is a fore-doomed attempt. The result is a dilution of the poetry. Feeling this to be so, we may surmise, Aiken next produced, in *Punch: The Immortal Liar* (Knopf) a brilliantly fantastic narrative steeped in strange philosophy, and followed it with his firmest and most lovely lyrics in *Priapus and the Pool* (Knopf). *The Pilgrimage of Festus* repeated his earlier attempts to blend poetry with music. Now he has emerged as a striking "stream of consciousness" novelist in *Blue Voyage* and his chiefly subjective short stories are of decided interest. As a critic he wrote a stimulating book in *Scepticisms*, which appeared eight years ago, and has also edited *Modern American Poets*, and *Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson.* His later poetic work has shown a marked increase in strength and originality.

SEA HOLLY

Begotten by the meeting of rock with rock,
The mating of rock and rock, rocks gnashing together;
Created so, and yet forgetful, walks
The seaward path, puts up her left hand, shades
Blue eyes, the eyes of rock, to see better
In slanting light the ancient sheep (which kneels

Biting the grass) the while her other hand,
Holding the wicker handle, turns the basket
Of eggs. The sea is high to-day. The eggs
Are cheaper. The sea is blown from the southwest
Confused, taking up sand and mud in waves.
The waves break, sluggish, in brown foam, the wind
Disperses (on the sheep and hawthorn) spray, —
And on her cheeks, the cheeks engendered of rock
And eyes, the colour of rock. The left hand
Falls from the eyes, and undecided slides
Over the left breast on which muslin lightly
Rests, touching the nipple, and then down
The hollow side, virgin as rock, and bitterly
Caresses the blue hip.
It was for this,
This obtuse taking of the seaward path,
This stupid hearing of larks, this hooking
Of wicker, this absent observation of sheep
Kneeling in harsh sea-grass, the cool hand shading
The spray-stung eyes — it was for this the rock
Smote itself. The sea is higher to-day,
And eggs are cheaper. The eyes of rock take in
The seaward path that winds toward the sea,
The thistle-prodder, old woman under a bonnet,
Forking the thistles, her back against the sea,
Pausing, with hard hands on the handle, peering
With rock-eyes from her bonnet.
It was for this,
This rock-lipped facing of brown waves, half sand
And half water, this tentative hand that slides
Over the breast of rock, and into the hollow
Soft side of muslin rock, and then fiercely
Almost as rock against the hip of rock —
It was for this in midnight the rocks met,
And dithered together, cracking and smoking.
It was for this,
Barren beauty, barrenness of rock that aches

On the seaward path, seeing the fruitful sea,
Hearing the lark of rock that sings, smelling
The rock-flower of hawthorn, sweetness of rock, —
It was for this, stone-pain in the stony heart,
The rock loved and laboured; and all is lost.

THE WEDDING

At noon, Tithonus, withered by his singing,
Climbing the oatstalk with his hairy legs,
Met grey Arachne, poisoned and shrunk down
By her own beauty; pride had shrivelled both.
In the white web — where seven flies hung wrapped —
She heard his footstep; hurried to him; bound him;
Enshrouded him in silk; then poisoned him.
Twice shrieked Tithonus, feebly; then was still.
Arachne loved him. Did he love Arachne?
She watched him with red eyes, venomous sparks,
And the furred claws outspread. . . . "O sweet Tithonus!
Darling! Be kind, and sing that song again!
Shake the bright web again with that deep fiddling!
Are you much poisoned? sleeping? do you dream?
Darling Tithonus!"
And Tithonus, weakly
Moving one hairy shin against the other
Within his silken sack, contrived to fiddle
A little tune, half-hearted: "Shrewd Arachne!
Whom pride in beauty withered to this shape
As pride in singing shrivelled me to mine —
Unwrap me, let me go — and let me limp,
With what poor strength your venom leaves me, down
This oatstalk, and away."
Arachne, angry,
Stung him again, twirling him with rough paws,
The red eyes keen. "What! You would dare to leave
me?
Unkind Tithonus! Sooner I'll kill and eat you

Than let you go. But sing that tune again —
So plaintive was it!"
And Tithonus faintly
Moved the poor fiddles, which were growing cold,
And sang: "Arachne, goddess envied of gods,
Beauty's eclipse eclipsed by angry beauty,
Have pity, do not ask the withered heart
To sing too long for you! My strength goes out,
Too late we meet for love. Oh, be content
With friendship, which the noon sun once may kindle
To give one flash of passion like a dewdrop,
Before it goes. . . . Be reasonable, — Arachne!"

Arachne heard the song grow weaker, dwindle
To first a rustle, and then half a rustle,
And last a tick, so small no ear could hear it
Save hers, a spider's ear. And her small heart
(Rusted away, like his, to a pinch of dust)
Gleamed once, like his, and died. She clasped him tightly
And sunk her fangs in him. Tithonus dead,
She slept awhile, her last sensation gone;
Woke from the nap, forgetting him; and ate him.

MAXWELL BODENHEIM (1892–)

Bodenheim was born in Mississippi. He enlisted in the American Army in 1910. In Chicago, later, he studied and wrote poetry. But it was not until 1918 that his first book appeared, entitled *Minna and Myself.* He is a poet with extreme mannerisms, possesses a steel-trap mind, is ego-centric to a degree, loves controversy and to indulge in personalities, and often treats the language he uses in his poems most acrobatically. He is an ironist, deeply sardonic. Sometimes his verbal dexterity is amazing. His earliest poems were more in the nature of

decorations, his later alternate a peculiar play of fancy with a direct riposting attack on whatever engages his mind. He etches in acid. He sometimes endeavors to shock for its own sake. But he is usually a subtle and skillful workman, a remarkably ingenious fashioner of phrase. Nor that merely: for through his best poems runs a vein of very sharp-sighted even though scathing commentary upon the shams of our civilization. His latest book of verse is *The King of Spain and Other Poems*.

Bodenheim has also written several novels, two being studies of different types of women. They are harshly realistic. His style in prose is not as effective as it is in poetry.

This poet has always been a rebel, but a rebel playing a lone hand. He has never associated himself with any particular cause or group. Certain readers will continue to see him as a mere playboy of language, but he frequently expresses his own unusual point of view most dexterously and illumines "the other side of the question" with a glaring light. His volumes have been published by Knopf and by Horace Liveright.

THE KING OF SPAIN

If you would know why men dread nonchalance
When nonchalance leans back upon the chair
Of thought, and orders motives and renowns
To pass, disrobed and soiled, before its stare;
And why men are not fearful when the words
Of earthly spontaneity insist
Upon the same exposure, you must hear
The story of the King of Spain's black tryst.

The King was middle-aged, and life had pressed
Its joking, deep, confused experiments
Upon his face, and had been half repelled

By shining, quickly said presentiments
Within his eyes and from his wary lips.
His face was dark, and like an endlessly
Half morbid tour-de-force, since he believed
That meditation and finesse should be
United in a lunge against decay.
To all his men and women he became
A masterful enigma, somehow raised
Above their customary love and blame.
He gave them boredom, pity, and contempt
In such a quick succession that they knelt
In fine bewilderment and then returned
Less confidently to their greed and stealth.
When men were dull sincere idealists,
His pleasantries pretended to agree,
And when their egotism snarled and leered
He fed them poison imperceptibly —
A poison wrought of promises and jibes
That made each malice indolent and slim,
Or caused its sword to strike impatiently
Against his heart forever taut and grim.
He laughed at women, and regarded them
As trumpets into which his vanity
Blew lyrics of completion and despair,
With intervals of bored profanity.
But when he met a woman with a mind
Of freshly seething images and hues,
He treated her with delicate reserve
As though she held incredible, bright news.

One night within his garden's trickery,
Where candid breezes twitted leaf and bloom
Impalpably and with erratic grace,
He looked upon the metal hint of doom.
The woman at his side was like a form
Of light and fragrance desperately wrought
Into a semblance of slow-breathing flesh,

With line and substance barely traced and caught.
Her black hair found a whiteness in the night,
Her eyes held earth and mysticism pressed
Into a lightly indecisive blue,
Her lips were whims whose words could not be guessed—
Almost intangible, and straight, and small.
Her skin was like a scarf dropped in a fight
Between the night and starlight, and her young
Unmoving body bore it, close and slight.

Observing every part of her, the King
Felt for the first time like an armless knave
Who longed to touch her and regain his limbs
But feared that he would find himself a slave.
He said: "My cynicism dies before
The scarcely plausible suspended guise
With which your slender form convinces me
That you are not a twinkling wisp of lies!
Within the heart of any libertine
A ghostly lad resents his furtive death,
And now I ask you to award him one
Imaginative hour of depth and breadth.
For laughter, weeping, and the intellect,
Swept close within your form no longer seem
To be unfriendly and implacable,
But find your bosom in an even dream."

She looked upon the trees and at the sky
As though they were a distant and a near
Betrayal and denial of her mood,
Disturbing her to preludes made of fear.
She said: "Behind the shrubbery that lines
This walk six men are waiting for the end
Of your bombastic, oddly humble words,
And when I signal to them they will rend
The artifice and venom of your heart.
Your stilted poetry and wilted lust,

They come together in a compromise
And bring distinction to your self-disgust.
Oh, you would like to think that all you see
Of me is but a sleight-of-hand affair
Made by the moon — yes, both your arms and lips
Are weary of the flesh, and they would dare
The novelty of raping spirit-forms.
You sat beside my sister underneath
This tree, and swore that she was like a wraith
Of thought and feeling holding up a wreath
Of starlight — scarcely strong enough to hold
The heavy light — while she became the clue
That saved you from a gross reality.
She died because her memory of you
Grew tall and starved within the empty prose
Of lonely mornings and less artful men.
My hatred for you is the miracle
With which I keep her face intact, and when
My signal now brings on your death, perhaps
Her own defrauded lips will fall apart,
And she will stand here waiting to restore
The maimed and frosty gamester of your heart!"

The King, who had been listening to her
With envy and regret pressed by a smile
To one still wrestle on his face, replied
In his accustomed, softly balanced style:
"The moon-glow, shift of leaves, and odors like
The fainting consolation made by night
To heal innumerable wounds, they turned
Your sister's body to an urgent, light
Retreat from lust, and jealousy, and fear.
Her sex was purified, frail, and unreal,
And when she leaned upon me I became
All perilously downcast, and could feel
Intense apologies for all the haste
And crudeness ever known to human touch.

But on the next day, when she stood within
The studied meanness of my court, with much
Inconsequential rouge upon her face,
With lips securely veiled and satisfied,
And all her speech unfruitful and demure,
I knew then that her heart and mind had lied.
You also were transfigured and aroused
Within this garden's verse of light and sound,
Until my words revived your hates and plans,
And pressed your feet once more upon the ground.
But you, unlike your sister, have a soul,
And you were not a magic accident
Born from the breath of night against your heart.
You will be forced to leave your small intent
And make your peace with moonlight on the trees.
Your plot was known to me, and yet I came
To watch the gamble of your wakened soul
With dark persuaders made of hate and blame."

Her pierced and insubstantial face revealed
Swift-moving shades of liking and despair,
Whose struggle seemed to rise into her hands
That rested on the blackness of her hair.
And then, without a word, she caught his arm
And walked beside him down the moon-striped path,
While six men cursed and wondered as they crouched
And waited for the signal of her wrath.

WALLACE STEVENS (1879–)

The Irish poet, James Stephens, has recently highly praised the work of our own poet, Wallace Stevens. The latter made one of that early group of *Others*, though he has always lived removed from any coteries, in his home in Hartford, Connecticut. Mr. Stevens is, in his poetry, an æsthete, a painter in words, a

subtle melodist. He is likewise sophisticated and often witty. He touches human interests and emotions most obliquely and lightly. His concern is with weaving phrases for his own delectation. But though remote and most eclectic, a grave beauty visits his best verse. Five years ago his only volume, *Harmonium*, was published by Knopf. It is a piquant but distinguished book. Louis Untermeyer has spoken of his "strangely fastidious and hermetic art," an excellent description of it.

PETER QUINCE AT THE CLAVIER

I

Just as my fingers on these keys
Make music, so the self-same sounds
On my spirit make a music too.

Music is feeling then, not sound;
And thus it is that what I feel,
Here in this room, desiring you,

Thinking of your blue-shadowed silk,
Is music. It is like the strain
Waked in the elders by Susanna.

Of a green evening, clear and warm,
She bathed in her still garden, while
The red-eyed elders, watching, felt

The basses of their being throb
In witching chords, and their thin blood
Pulse pizzicati of Hosanna.

II

In the green evening, clear and warm,
Susanna lay.

She searched
The touch of springs,
And found
Concealed imaginings.

She sighed
For so much melody.

Upon the bank she stood
In the cool
Of spent emotions.
She felt, among the leaves,
The dew
Of old devotions.

She walked upon the grass,
Still quavering.
The winds were like her maids,
On timid feet,
Fetching her woven scarves,
Yet wavering.

A breath upon her hand
Muted the night.
She turned —
A cymbal clashed,
And roaring horns.

III

Soon, with a noise like tambourines,
Came her attendant Byzantines.

They wondered why Susanna cried
Against the elders by her side:

And as they whispered, the refrain
Was like a willow swept by rain.

Anon their lamps' uplifted flame
Revealed Susanna and her shame.

And then the simpering Byzantines
Fled, with a sound like tambourines.

IV

Beauty is momentary in the mind —
The fitful tracing of a portal;
But in the flesh it is immortal.

The body dies; the body's beauty lives.
So evenings die, in their green going,
A wave, interminably flowing.

So gardens die, their meek breath scenting
The cowl of Winter, done repenting.
So maidens die, to the auroral
Celebration of a maiden's choral.

Susanna's music touched the bawdy strings
Of those white elders; but, escaping,
Left only Death's ironic scraping.
Now in its immortality, it plays
On the clear viol of her memory,
And makes a constant sacrament of praise.

THE WORMS AT HEAVEN'S GATE

Out of the tomb we bring Badroulbadour
Within our bellies — we her chariot.
Here is an eye; and here are, one by one,
The lashes of that eye and its white lid.

Here is the cheek on which that lid declined,
And, finger after finger, here the hand,

The genius of that cheek. Here are the lips,
The bundle of the body, and the feet.
. . . . . .
Out of the tomb we bring Badroulbadour.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS (1883–)

Doctor Williams was born in Rutherford, New Jersey, where he now practices medicine and has since 1910. His father was English, his mother born in Porto Rico. Dr. Williams himself attended the Horace Mann School in New York City, studied in Switzerland also, and graduated from the medical course of the University of Pennsylvania in 1906. A heritage of mingled bloods may have something to do with the distinctly foreign flavour of some of his work. His first book, *The Tempers*, was published in London in 1913. Four years later came *Al Que Quiere*, followed by *Kora in Hell* (1921), *Sour Grapes* (1922), *Spring and All* (1923), *Go. Go.* (the number-two issue of a series known as *Manikin*, published by Monroe Wheeler in the same year), a volume of unusual historical prose, and *A Voyage to Pagany*.

Doctor Williams also contributed to Alfred Kreymborg's *Others*. His poetry is of the cerebral type. A great deal of it is caviare to the general. He is, however, an important poet of the left wing, a man of keen intellect though lacking, one feels, in a sense of organization in his writing.

PEACE ON EARTH

The Archer is wake!
The Swan is flying!
Gold against blue
An Arrow is lying.

There is hunting in heaven —
Sleep safe till to-morrow.

The Bears are abroad!
The Eagle is screaming!
Gold against blue
Their eyes are gleaming!
Sleep!
Sleep safe till to-morrow.

The Sisters lie
With their arms intertwining;
Gold against blue
Their hair is shining!
The Serpent writhes!
Orion is listening!
Gold against blue
His sword is glistening!
Sleep!
There is hunting in heaven —
Sleep safe till to-morrow.

LOVE SONG

Daisies are broken
petals are news of the day
stems lift to the grass tops
they catch on shoes
part in the middle
leave root and leaves secure.

Black branches
carry square leaves
to the wood's top.
They hold firm
break with a roar
show the white!

Your moods are slow
the shedding of leaves
and sure
the return in May!

We walked
in your father's grove
and saw the great oaks
lying with roots
ripped from the ground.

E. E. CUMMINGS (1896–)

Edward Estlin Cummings is regarded by the intellectuals of the time as only second in importance to T. S. Eliot among American poets. He is addicted to strange typographical arrangements of his verse, some of which are effective but more often merely puzzling. His work is extremely idiosyncratic. That he can write remarkable prose was proved by his descriptions of his foreign imprisonment during the War, in *The Enormous Room* (Boni & Liveright). He is a genuine lyric poet with a mania for trying to conceal beautiful rhetoric by the most eccentric presentation on the page. His eccentricities are not nearly so important as the beauty of phrase of which he is capable. He has published a number of books, the first of which was *Tulips and Chimneys* (Seltzer, 1923), followed by *LVI Poems*, *&*, and *Is Five*. His most recent work has been an extraordinary play, *Him* (Boni & Liveright), which was produced in New York to the utter bafflement of most of the critics. It is a most confusing play to read. Cummings first contributed much poetry to *The Dial* and more recently has written on many subjects for *Vanity Fair*. There is no doubt as to his having a genuine touch of genius, but, underneath all modernist trappings, it is

found to exist in a gift of traditional rhetoric, often evolving fresh and original phrase. His work has not, as yet, become entirely mature. His startling experiments have made him a sensation. He has juggled great natural gifts. Being entirely his own man, with an untiring zest for experimentation, his work stands apart from criticism, a weird portent. But he remains a lyrist born, in spite of his love of fireworks.

SONG

All in green went my love riding
on a great horse of gold
into the silver dawn.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling
the merry deer ran before.

Fleeter be they than dappled dreams
the swift sweet deer
the red rare deer.

Four red roebuck at a white water
the cruel bugle sang before.

Horn at hip went my love riding
riding the echo down
into the silver dawn.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling
the level meadows ran before.

Softer be they than slippered sleep
the lean lithe deer
the fleet flown deer.

Four fleet does at a gold valley
the famished arrow sang before.

Bow at belt went my love riding
riding the mountain down
into the silver dawn.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling
the sheer peaks ran before.

Paler be they than daunting death
the sleek slim deer
the tall tense deer.

Four tall stags at a green mountain
the lucky hunter sang before.

All in green went my love riding
on a great horse of gold
into the silver dawn.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling
my heart fell dead before.

PORTRAIT — II

of evident invisibles
exquisite the hovering

at the dark portals

of hurt girl eyes

sincere with wonder

a poise a wounding
a beautiful suppression

the accurate boy mouth

now droops the faun head

now the intimate flower dreams

of parted lips
dim upon the syrinx

PORTRAIT — X

somebody knew Lincoln somebody Xerxes

this man: a narrow thudding timeshaped face
plus innocuous winking hands, carefully
inhabits number 1 on something street

Spring comes
the lean and definite houses

are troubled. A sharp blue day
fills with peacefully leaping air
the minute mind of the world.
The lean and

definite houses are
troubled. in the sunset their chimneys converse
angrily, their
roofs are nervous with the soft furious
light, and while fire-escapes and
roofs and chimneys and while roofs and fire-escapes and
chimneys and while chimneys and fire-escapes
and roofs are talking rapidly all together there happens
Something, and They

cease (and
one by one are turned suddenly and softly
into irresponsible toys.)
when this man with

the brittle legs winces
swiftly out of number 1 someThing
street and trickles carefully into the park
sits

Down. pigeons circle
around and around and around the

irresponsible toys
circle wildly in the slow-ly-in creasing fragility
—. Dogs
bark
children
play
-ing
Are

in the beautiful nonsense of twilight

and somebody Napoleon

SONNET — REALITIES I.

the Cambridge ladies who live in furnished souls
are unbeautiful and have comfortable minds
(also, with the church's protestant blessings
daughters, unscented shapeless spirited)
they believe in Christ and Longfellow, both dead,
are invariably interested in so many things —
at the present writing one still finds
delighted fingers knitting for the is it Poles?
perhaps. While permanent faces coyly bandy
scandal of Mrs. N and Professor D
. . . . the Cambridge ladies do not care, above
Cambridge if sometimes in its box of
sky lavender and cornerless, the
moon rattles like a fragment of angry candy

HERBERT GORMAN (1893-)

To-day Herbert Gorman is known for his biographical and critical work, and as a novelist as well as a poet. He has written *James Joyce: His First Forty Years*, a biography of Longfellow (Doubleday, Doran), a book on Hawthorne, and, more lately, a life of Dumas. His novels have been *Gold by Gold*, *The Two Virginities*, and, most recent, *The Place called Dagon* (Doubleday, Doran), a story of witchcraft in New England which won praise from Ford Madox Ford. Though Gorman, after his schooling, became an actor for a brief period, he soon went into newspaper work. He worked long for the Springfield *Union* where he became assistant literary and dramatic editor, and then came to New York, where he assisted on the old New York *Sun Book Review*, worked on the *New York Evening Post*, did much reviewing for the *New York Times Book Review*, wrote for *The Freeman*, and has most recently done critical work for *Books*, of the *New York Herald-Tribune*. He has also instructed at New York University.

His poetry, which has been influenced in turn by Edwin Arlington Robinson and by T. S. Eliot, has steadily improved in originality. Some of his latest poems won a prize from *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*. His first book, a thin pamphlet published in 1920, was *The Fool of Love*. This was followed two years later by *The Barcarole of James Smith and Other Poems* (Putnam). *Notations for a Chimæra* appeared in a limited edition subsequent to this. It is in some of these *Notations* and some of Gorman's later as yet uncollected work that his best poetry is to be found. It is strongly imaginative and of much philosophical interest. As a student of literature both here and abroad, and as the possessor of a mind of severe originality, Gorman is one of the most interesting figures of our time.

MARCH–PATROL OF THE NAKED HEROES

Hoofs of thunder, fetlocks splashed with sunrise,
in the early morning when the great cocks
Lift their crimson combs against the tawny
gold of morning,

And the flaring oak-trees rise like peacocks
From their crystal beds of dew and flourish
jewel-blazing tails against the day's eye,
and the voices

shouting through a mist of spinning arrows,
through a golden rain of burning spear-heads,
while the arrogant shrill trumpets mingle
brazen warnings.

See, to throbbing tambours, fevered tom-toms,
naked men on shaggy horses pressing
giant thighs against bright hide that glistens
in the sunlight,

hairy chests and open mouths of triumph,
back-flung locks and lifted arms and torsos
swaying in the green-gold fire of morning,
rippled muscles,

moving through the trees to throbbing thunder,
wheeling through the dust-dance of the white road,
twisting by the blue steel blade of water
where the red birds

rise like whirling puffs of flame, like blossoms
petalled with bright wings of fire, and whistle
glassy slivers of shrill sound at silence
and the river.

Chanting voices climb the jade-green terrace
of the morning and the horses whinney
splashing through the brittle reeds and stamping
by the current.

Naked heroes riding on great horses,
pounding Time to tatters with swift hoof-beats,
pass to hollow thunder in the day-spring,
in the morning.

CHANSON DE CHATEAULAIRE

Though I am Chateaulaire who sings,
The pale man with the Chinese rings,
The cloudy-headed cane, the spats
Pearl-grey, the vast array of hats,
The gloves, the dragon samovar,
The tiny jugs of caviar,
The rare Picasso and the plate
From whose pale disk Marcel Proust ate,
Think not that I am wholly lost
Who never quite may count the cost.

Think not that I who spend my days
So greatly in such little ways,
Refinding in small *objets d'art*
My still renewed malefic star,
Find not a curious passion too
Not wholly visible to you,
Find epics in a whispered word
And in a tie-pin Hector's sword,
And altitudes above the snow
Half-chiselled in a cameo.

Though I am Chateaulaire who looms
A weary lounger in bright rooms

Where tea-cups clash, whose drooping hair
Discreetly dyed is dubious fair,
Who kisses polished finger-tips
Poetically with thin lips
And murmurs graceful commonplaces
To duchesses with pock-marked faces,
Think not that I am wholly found
Where women laugh and viols sound.

Though Guerlain's perfume fill the air
And sallow barons mount the stair,
Napoléon brandy heat the brain,
Hispanos slur through Paris rain,
Blonde hair efface the sleepy lights,
Slav dancers pirouette in tights,
And husky voices talk and talk
Of nothing while gold slippers walk
Through Lanvin laces, think not I
Am wholly lost in Time's dark sigh.

Each instant my Antaeus-rhyme
Gives back the lie to lecherous Time,
While odors fill me with that fire
Which is the death of all desire,
And amorous mouths forever give
Me death in life and bid me live:
The heavy scents, the parted lips
Are but the soul's perturbed eclipse,
Wherein the shadow is a well
Reflecting all those stars in hell.

And though the dark-browed midnight moans
To the frustrated saxophones,
Though the despairing violin
Like needles pierces through the skin,
And angry breasts rise up and fall
In foxtrots where the jewels call

One to the other, sard to pearl,
And every instant is a girl
Dying against Night's dinner-coat,
Time's hands upon her pulsing throat,

I lose and find myself therein,
A blown note in the rhythmic din
Enlarging till all sounds are one,
And that is I. For this I go
Where clinging silk is soft as snow —
The pale man with the Chinese rings,
The slender cane and brittle things —
And with a languid air present
The era with a testament.

JOHN CROWE RANSOM (1888–)

Nine years ago Christopher Morley introduced Mr. Ransom's first book of poems to the public. This was *Poems about God* (Holt). The author had been a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, following his graduation from Vanderbilt University in Tennessee. He left Oxford in 1913 and returned to Vanderbilt as an instructor. He finally became Associate Professor of English there. During the War he was with the A.E.F.

It was due to Ransom that *The Fugitive*, "a more or less modest periodical of verse published in Nashville, Tennessee," began to appear. *The Fugitive* was wholly devoted to original poetry. A number of different men and one woman, Laura Riding (Gottschalk), contributed to it. Such poets as Donald Davidson and Allen Tate first presented their work therein. In 1924 Ransom published his second volume, *Chills and Fever* (Knopf), a great advance on his first book. In the same year Robert Graves wrote an introduction to *Grace After Meat*, containing selections from both his books,

published in England by the Hogarth Press. More recently Ransom has given us *Two Gentlemen in Bonds*.

Ransom's poetry is of the study, for the most part, full of allusiveness — elusive also, mannered, not without pedantry. But he reveals one of the most original minds of our day. He is quizzical, crabbed, tangential in his treatment, but his idiom is not always hard to master. He can command a direct and forceful style. He has written a great deal that demands sifting. But his best is as original as anything being done in our time.

SPECTRAL LOVERS

By night they haunted a thicket of April mist,
As out of the rich ground strangely come to birth,
Else two immaculate angels fallen on earth.
Lovers they knew they were, but why unclasped, unkissed?
Why should two lovers go frozen asunder in fear?
And yet they were, they were.

Over the shredding of an April blossom
Her thrilling fingers touched him quick with care;
Of many delicate postures she cast a snare;
But for all the red heart beating in the pale bosom,
Her face as of cunningly tinctured ivory
Was hard with an agony.

Stormed by the little batteries of an April night,
Passionate being the essences of the field,
Should the penetrable walls of the crumbling prison yield
And open her treasure to the first clamorous knight?
"This is the mad moon, and must I surrender all?
If he but ask it, I shall."

And gesturing largely to the very moon of Easter,
Mincing his steps, and swishing the jubilant grass,
And beheading some field-flowers that had come to pass,
He had reduced his tributaries faster,
Had not considerations pinched his heart
Unfitly for his art.

"Am I reeling with the sap of April like a drunkard?
Blessed is he that taketh this richest of cities;
But it is so stainless, the sack were a thousand pities;
This is that marble fortress not to be conquered,
Lest its white peace in the black flame turn to tinder
And an unutterable cinder."

They passed me once in April, in the mist.
No other season is it, when one walks and discovers
Two clad in the shapes of angels, being spectral lovers,
Trailing a glory of moon-gold and amethyst,
Who touch their quick fingers fluttering like a bird
Whose songs shall never be heard.

NUMBER FIVE

"Come in out of the night," said the landlord.
"Hang up your caps, men, and I will pass the gin."
And what for us thirsty pirates but walk right in,
Me with my lips locked tight, saying not a word?

Five hang-dog men, and I was number five.
"Give us a drink then, mate. It's terrible loud
And it's terrible bitter under the storm-cloud,
And we be blown to deader than alive."

God bless strong drink that's given to the weak.
Five of us sat to the bottle, but I was one,
For thinking of what so desperate had been done,
I couldn't drink to my mates, lest I might speak.

"Here's one won't take his drink. Now is he proud?
This is a rummy lad," says the proprietor.
Says he, "I've not seen this young beauty quieter."
Thinks I, "Now it is going to come out loud."

And here comes the girl, and looks us in the face —
Never she'd seen us faces more in evil
Nor us great hulks with more power of the devil —
But finally she sits down in the sixth place,

And presses my hand. But I turn like a hare,
I run to the window over the black water,
Thinking if I may tell them what's the matter;
Happen it's dark, but I know what is down there.

But open field is better. And I slide down
And howl in the storm, with let for my slippery tongue
That never to girls nor priests may tell the wrong —
And I run by the river where the dead things drown.

ARCHIBALD MacLEISH (1892–)

TEN years ago Archibald MacLeish was one of a group of Yale undergraduate poets that included Stephen Vincent Benét, Phelps Putnam, and Thornton Wilder, among the names of men who have since achieved in literature. He was born at Glencoe, Illinois. His first book, *Tower of Ivory*, was published by the Yale University Press in 1917. It was not particularly notable. Seven years elapsed, during which MacLeish was apparently bound over to the law (with an interruption of two war years), before his second volume, *The Happy Marriage*, appeared in 1924, to be followed quickly, within two more years by *The Pot of Earth* (Houghton Mifflin Company), *Nobodaddy*, *Streets in the Moon* (Houghton Mifflin Company), and *The Hamlet of*

A. MacLeish (Houghton Mifflin Company). Meanwhile MacLeish had been living in Paris and studying and discussing the most modern developments of art.

The improvement in his work has been amazing. Though his personal impress is not yet as firm and sharp upon his work as it is sure later to be he is always an interesting and often a very effective writer. He is versatile, with flashes of high originality. He has melody and singing grace. He is a penetrating psychologist.

Archibald MacLeish, though with achievement already to his credit, seems to us one of the most promising of our younger poets in that the range of his work prophesies a possible development of major importance. He has passed through a number of artistic phases and has escaped with his own individuality. We have considerable hopes of what the years to come may bring from him.

THE END OF THE WORLD

QUITE unexpectedly as Vasserot
the armless ambidextrian was lighting
a match between his great and second toe
and Ralph, the lion, was engaged in biting
the neck of Madam Sossman while the drum
pointed, and Fifi was about to cough
in waltztime swinging Lily by the thumb —
quite unexpectedly the top blew off,

and there, there overhead, there, there, hung over
those thousands of white faces, those dazed eyes,
there in the starless dark the poise, the hover,
there with vast wings across the cancelled skies,
there in the sudden blackness the black pall
of nothing — nothing — nothing — nothing at all.

YOU, ANDREW MARVELL

And here face down beneath the sun,
And here upon earth's noonward height,
To feel the always coming on,
The always rising of the night.

To feel creep up the curving east
The earthly chill of dusk and slow
Upon those under lands the vast
And ever-climbing shadow grow,

And strange at Ecbatan the trees
Take leaf by leaf the evening, strange,
The flooding dark about their knees,
The mountains over Persia change,

And now at Kermanshah the gate,
Dark, empty, and the withered grass,
And through the twilight now the late
Few travellers in the westward pass,

And Baghdad darken and the bridge
Across the silent river gone,
And through Arabia the edge
Of evening widen and steal on,

And deepen on Palmyra's street
The wheel rut in the ruined stone,
And Lebanon fade out and Crete
High through the clouds and overblown,

And over Sicily the air
Still flashing with the landward gulls,
And loom and slowly disappear
The sails above the shadowy hulls,

And Spain go under and the shore
Of Africa, the gilded sand,
And evening vanish and no more
The low pale light across that land,

Nor now the long light on the sea —

And here face downward in the sun
To feel how swift, how secretly,
The shadow of the night comes on. . . .

HART CRANE (1899–)

HART CRANE is a well-nigh baffling poet representing the newest tendencies. Much of his work, as shown in his volume, *White Buildings* (Boni & Liveright) seems very obscure. But the striking dramatist, Eugene O'Neill, has found his poems "profound and deep-seeking. In them he reveals, with a new insight, and unique power, the mystic undertones of beauty which move words to express vision." And such modern critics as Edmund Wilson and Allen Tate declare him one of the most important of our younger writers. In certain poems, such as the ones included here, he undoubtedly evinces power.

He was born in Garretsville, Ohio. His academic education was early broken off, after which he has been successively employed as: mechanic, bench-hand, shipyard bolter-up, newspaper reporter, hod carrier, book clerk, shipping clerk, and advertising copy-writer. Of late, in the West Indies, he was engaged in writing a long poem, *The Bridge*. He is, at the time of this compilation, living in California.

THE TUNNEL

To find the Western path
Right thro' the Gates of Wrath
— BLAKE.

PERFORMANCES, assortments, résumés ——
Up Times Square to Columbus Circle lights
Channel the congresses, nightly sessions,
Refractions of the thousand theatres, faces ——
Mysterious kitchens . . . You shall search them all.
Someday by heart you'll learn each famous sight
And watch the curtain lift in hell's despite;
You'll find the garden in the third act dead,
Finger your knees — and wish yourself in bed
With tabloid crime-sheets perched in easy sight.

Then let you reach your hat
and go.
As usual, let you — also
walking down — exclaim
to twelve upward leaving
a subscription praise
for what time slays . . .

Or can't you quite make up your mind to ride;
A walk is better underneath the L for a brisk
Ten blocks or so before? But you find yourself
Preparing penguin flexions of the arms ——
As usual you will meet the scuttle yawn:
The subway yawns the quickest promise home.

Be minimum then, to swim the hiving swarms
Out of the Square, the Circle burning bright ——
Avoid the glass doors gyring at your right,
Where boxed alone a second, eyes take fright
— Quite unprepared rush naked back to light:
And down beside the turnstile press the coin
Into the slot. The gongs already rattle.

And so
of cities you bespeak
subways, rivered under streets
and rivers . . . In the car
the overtone of motion
underground, the monotone
of motion is the sound
of other faces, also underground ——

"Let's have a pencil Jimmy — living now
at Floral Park
Flatbush — on the fourth of July ——
like a pigeon's muddy dream — potatoes
to dig in the field — travlin' the town too ——
night after night — the Culver line — the
girls all shaping up — it used to be ——"

Our tongues recant like beaten weather vanes.
This answer lives like verdigris, like hair
Beyond extinction, surcease of the bone;
And repetition freezes — "What

"what do you want? getting weak on the links?
fandaddle daddy don't ask for change — IS THIS
FOURTEENTH? it's half-past six she said — if
you don't like my gate why did you
swing on it, why *didja*
swing on it
anyhow ——"
And somehow anyhow swing ——

The phonographs of hades in the brain
Are tunnels that re-wind themselves, and love ——
A burnt match skating in a urinal
Somewhere above Fourteenth TAKE THE EXPRESS
To brush some new presentiment of pain ——

"But I want service in this office SERVICE
I said — after
the show she cried a little afterwards but ——"

Whose head is swinging from the swollen strap?
Whose body smokes along the bitten rails,
Bursts from a smoldering bundle far behind
In back forks of the chasms of the brain ——
Puffs from a riven stump far out behind
In interborough fissures of the mind . . .?

And why do I often meet your visage here,
Your eyes like agate lanterns — on and on
Below the toothpaste and the dandruff ads?
—— And did their riding eyes right through your side,
And did their eyes like unwashed platters ride?
And Death, aloft — gigantically down
Probing through you toward me, O Evermore!
And when they dragged your retching flesh,
Your trembling hands that night through Baltimore
That last night on the ballot rounds, did you.
Shaking — did you deny the ticket, Poe?

For Gravesend Manor change at Chambers Street.
The platform hurries along to a dead stop.

The intent escalator lifts a serenade
Stilly
Of shoes, umbrellas, each eye attending its shoe, then
Bolting outright somewhere above where streets
Burst suddenly in rain . . . The gongs recur:
Elbows and levers, guard and hissing door.
Thunder is galvothermic here below . . . The car
Wheels off. The train rounds, bending to a scream,
Taking the final level for the dive
Under the river ——

And somewhat emptier than before,
Demented, for a hitching second, humps; then
Lets go . . . Toward corners of the floor
Newspapers wing, revolve and wing.
Blank windows gargle signals through the roar.

And does the Daemon take you home, also,
Wop washerwoman, with the bandaged hair?
After the corridors are swept, the cuspidors ——
The gaunt sky-barracks cleanly now, and bare,
O Genoese, do you bring mother eyes and hands
Back home to children and to golden hair?

Daemon, demurring and eventful yawn!
Whose hideous laughter is the bellows mirth
—— Or the muffled slaughter of a day in birth ——
O cruelly to innoculate the brinking dawn
With antennæ towards worlds that spark and
sink ——
To spoon us out more liquid than the dim
Locution of the eldest star, and pack
The conscience navelled in the plunging wind,
Umbilical to call — and straightway die!
O caught like pennies beneath soot and steam,
Kiss of our agony thou gatherest;
Condensed, thou takest all — shrill ganglia
Impassioned with some song we fail to keep.
And yet, like Lazarus, to feel the slope,
The sod and billow breaking — lifting ground,
—— A sound of waters bending astride the sky
Unceasing with some word that will not die!

. . . . . .

A tugboat, wheezing wreathes of steam,
Lunged past, with one galvanic blare stove up the river.
I counted the echoes assembling, one after one,
Searching, thumbing the midnight on the piers.
Lights, coasting left the oily tympanum of waters;
The blackness somewhere gouged glass on a sky.

And this thy harbor, O my City, I have driven under,
Tossed from the coil of ticking towers . . . Tomorrow,
And to be . . . Here by the River that is East ——
Here at the waters' edge the hands drop memory;
Shadowless in that abyss they unaccounting lie.
How far away the star has pooled the sea ——
Or shall the hands be drawn away, to die?

Kiss of our agony Thou gatherest,
O Hand of Fire
gatherest ——

MARIANNE MOORE (1887–)

William Carlos Williams has said, in part, of Marianne Moore: "Miss Moore undertakes in her work to separate the poetry from the subject entirely — like all moderns. In this she has been rarely successful and this is important. . . . The only help I ever got from Miss Moore toward the understanding of her verse was that she despised connectives. Any other assistance would have been an impoliteness, since she has always been sure of herself if not of others. The complete poem is there waiting: all the wit, the color, the constructive ability (not a particularly strong point that however). And the quality of satisfaction gathered from reading her is that one may seek long in those exciting mazes, sure of coming out at the right door in the end. There is nothing missing but the connectives. . . . With Miss Moore a word is a word most when it is separated out by science, treated with acid to remove the smudges, washed, dried and placed right side up on a clean surface." And Louis Untermeyer, not so impressed with Miss Moore's work as poetry, has called it rather "a sort of witty and ironic geometry." Certainly, it is perplexing. In our own opinion Miss Moore is a bril-

liant essayist *manqué*. She is aloof and recondite. Her disdain of connectives makes her obscure.

Marianne Moore was born in St. Louis, spent much of her youth in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1909. For nearly ten years she has been an assistant in the Hudson Park Branch of the New York Public Library. Her poems first began to appear in the London *Egoist* in 1915, and The Egoist Press published her *Poems*, unbeknown to her, six years later. She received *The Dial's* 1924 prize for distinguished literary work when a new volume of poems old and new, entitled *Observations* (Dial Press), was published. This is the volume of her poems to possess. It will repay study with occasional delicious sidelong comment and descriptive phrase. Her irony is demure, but none the less biting at times. She preserves the mysterious aplomb of a cat that remembers Egypt. Deeply religious in secret, usually amused and quite unperturbed she wears an uncompromisingly stiff, flat, black hat over severely chastened red-gold hair.

A TALISMAN

Under a splintered mast,
  Torn from the ship and cast
Near her hull,

A stumbling shepherd found
Embedded in the ground,
  A seagull

Of lapis lazuli,
A scarab of the sea,
  With wings spread —

Curling its coral feet,
Parting its beak to greet
  Men long dead.

THAT HARP YOU PLAY SO WELL

O David, if I had
Your power, I should be glad —
  In harping, with the sling,
  In patient reasoning!

Blake, Homer, Job, and you,
Have made old wine-skins new.
  Your energies have wrought
  Stout continents of thought.

But, David, if the heart
Be brass, what boots the art
  Of exorcising wrong,
  Of harping to a song?

The sceptre and the ring
And every royal thing
  Will fail. Grief's lustiness
  Must cure the harp's distress.

HE MADE THIS SCREEN

not of silver nor of coral,
but of weatherbeaten laurel.

Here, he introduced a sea
uniform like tapestry;

here, a fig-tree; there, a face;
there, a dragon circling space —

designating here, a bower;
there, a pointed passion-flower.

LAURA RIDING (1901–)

Laura Riding (Gottschalk) was one of the group who originally appeared in *The Fugitive*, published in Tennessee. She is not, however, an actual Southerner. She is now living in England and has recently collaborated in a *Survey of Modernist Poetry*, with Robert Graves (Doubleday, Doran). She has also brought out *The Close Chaplet* (Adelphi Company), *Love as Love, Death as Death* (London: The Seizin Press), and *Contemporaries and Snobs*, prose (Doubleday, Doran). She has contributed to *Transition*, the periodical published in Paris by a group of young writers in English who belong to the artistic left wing. She is an intellectual ironist, a decidedly obscure poet whose work is enigmatic and often tortuous. She has studied Gertrude Stein and is extremely interested in theories of modern poetry. She may possibly be ahead of her day in the methods she pursues.

In the simpler poems of Laura Riding, where none are truly simple, close attention reveals a sometimes profound meaning beneath the complicated statement. Her work remains for the few who have the patience and assiduity to pursue the sparse clues she gives them. Her poems are metaphysical in the modern sense; she weaves subtle webs of words. Often words seem to entangle her as a snare. She deals with abstruse meanings and shades of meanings. Her epigrams are very often cryptograms, the cipher to which is hidden in her peculiar personality. Her work is almost entirely subjective. She is the author of a book on Voltaire published in London by the Hogarth Press.

SEA, FALSE PHILOSOPHY

Foremost of false philosophies,
The sea harangues the daft,
The possessed logicians of romance.

Their swaying gaze, that swaying mass
Embrace in everlasting loss —
Sea is the spurned dust
Sifted with fine renunciation
Into a metaphor,
A slow dilution.

The drifting rhythms mesmerise
The inward book of dreams.
The lines intone and are not mathematical.
The course is overtrue and knows
Neither a wreckage nor a sequel.

Optimisms in despair
Embark upon this apathetic frenzy.
Brains baffled in their eyes
Rest on this picture of monotony
And swoon with thanks.
Ah, hearts whole so peculiarly,
Heaven keep you by such argument
Persuaded and unbroken,
Heaven keep you if it can
When with dialectic pride
You touch the simple moon
And break the hollow tide
And scatter to a watery zero
As the last rash prophecy is spoken.

O VOCABLES OF LOVE

O VOCABLES of love,
O zones of dreamt responses
Where wing on wing folds in
The negro centuries of sleep
And the thick lips compress
Compendiums of silence —

Throats claw the mirror of blind triumph,
Eyes pursue sight inside the heart of terror.
Rap, rap, in, out!
Call within call
Succumbs to the indistinguishable
Wall within wall
Embracing the last crushed vocable,
The spoken unity of efforts.

O vocables of love,
The end of an end is an echo.
A last cry follows a last cry.
Finality of finality
Is perfection's touch of folly,
Ruin unfolds from ruin.
A remnant breeds a universe of fragment.
Horizons spread intelligibility.
And once more it is yesterday.

PART VI

JOHN G. NEIHARDT (1881–)

NEIHARDT has been at work for eleven years on an Epic Cycle which constitutes the most important narrative verse treatment of our Western history that has been done in this country. The first poem of this cycle, *The Song of Hugh Glass*, appeared in 1915. *The Song of Three Friends* followed four years later. A third poem in the cycle appeared in 1925, *The Song of the Indian Wars*. This last is Neihardt's most notable achievement.

It is as a narrative poet rather than as a lyrist that Neihardt will endure. His purpose has been "to preserve the great race-mood of courage that was developed west of the Missouri River in the nineteenth century." He was born in Illinois and graduated in 1897 from Nebraska Normal College. He lived for six years among the Omaha Indians, a Siouan people. He knows his West thoroughly and at first hand. *A Bundle of Myrrh*, published in 1908, was the first volume of his to attract attention, save for some remarkable short stories that had been appearing in the magazines. His first poetry was lyrical, passionate, in most instances overstressed. *Man-Song* followed the next year, and *The Stranger at the Gate* in 1911. A selection of the best of his lyrics, *The Quest*, came out in 1916. Recently the best of his short stories have been gathered together. He has essayed poetic drama, not wholly successfully. Virility was always the keynote of his work. His sense of the dramatic is strong. His lyrics have often a sharp and poignant beauty, but he always had a tendency to write at too great length as a lyrist. The final development of his narrative verse cannot, however, be accorded

too high praise. The historical episodes in *The Song of the Indian Wars* are treated with a vigor and vividness, the interest is sustained at a pitch that few contemporary poets could equal. Neihardt has succeeded with the large canvas where in short flights he had proved but an uneven singer, sharp beauty lancing through much mere rhetoric. He is at present a literary editor in the West. His *Collected Poems* are published by Macmillan.

THE PRAIRIE FIRE[1]

From THE SONG OF THREE FRIENDS

The firm, familiar world,
It seemed, was melting down, and Chaos swirled
Once more across the transient realms of form
To scatter in the primal atom-storm
The earth's rich dust and potency of dreams.
Infernal geysers gushed, and sudden streams
Of rainbow flux went roaring up the skies
Through ghastly travesties of Paradise,
Where, drowsy in a tropic summertide,
Strange gaudy flowers bloomed and aged and died —
Whole seasons in a moment. Bloody rain,
Blown slant like April silver, spewed the plain
To mock the fallow sod; and where it fell
Anemones and violets of hell
Foreran the fatal summer.

Spurs bit deep,
Now down the hill where shadow-haunted sleep
Fell from the broken wind's narcotic breath,
The ponies plunged. A sheltered draw, where death
Seemed brooding in the silence, heard them pass.
A hollow, deep with tangled jointed grass,

[1] From John G. Neihardt, *The Song of Three Friends*. Copyright, 1919, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Snatched at the frantic hoofs. Now up a slope
They clambered, blowing, at a stumbling lope
And, reined upon the summit, wheeled to stare.
The stallion snorted, and the rearing mare
Screamed at the sight and bolted down the wind.
The writhing Terror, scarce a mile behind,
Appeared to gain; while far to left and right
Its flanks seemed bending in upon the night —
A ten-league python closing on its prey.

No guiding hand was needed for the way;
Blind speed was all. So little Nature heeds
The fate of men, these blew as tumbleweeds
Before that dwarfing, elemental rage.
A gray wolf bounded from a clump of sage;
A rabbit left its bunchgrass nest and ran
Beside its foe; and neither dreaded Man,
The deadliest of all earth's preying things.
A passing knoll exploded into wings,
And prairie owls, befuddled by the light,
Went tumbling up like patches of the night
The burning tempest tattered.

Leaning low,
The gasping riders let the ponies go,
. . . . . .
Now it happened, as they neared
A lofty butte whose summit glimmered weird
Beneath the lurid boiling of the sky,
Talbeau was startled by a frantic cry
Behind him; noted that he rode alone,
And, turning in the saddle, saw the roan
Go stumbling down and wither to a heap.
And momently, between a leap and leap,
The love of self was mighty in the man;
For now the Terror left the hills and ran
With giant strides along the grassy plains.

Dear Yesterdays fought wildly for the reins,
To-morrows for the spur. And then the mare
Heeled to the sawing bit and pawed the air
And halted, prancing.

Once again Talbeau
Looked back to where the sparks were blown as snow
Before that blizzard blast of scorching light,
And saw Fink running down the painted night
Like some lost spirit fleeing from the Wrath.

From THE SONG OF THE INDIAN WARS

Roman Nose Rides [1]

He cast his robe away,
Got up and took the bonnet from its case
And donned it; put the death-paint on his face
And mounted, saying "Now I go to die!"
Thereat he lifted up a bull-lunged cry
That clamored far among the hills around;
And dying men took courage at the sound
And muttered "He is coming."

Now it fell
That those upon the island heard a yell
And looked about to see from whence it grew.
They saw a war-horse hurtled from the blue,
A big-boned chestnut, clean and long of limb,
That did not dwarf the warrior striding him,
So big the man was. Naked as the day
The neighbors sought his mother's lodge to say
"This child shall be a trouble to his foes"
(Save for a gorgeous bonnet), Roman Nose
Came singing on the run. And as he came
Mad hundreds hailed him, booming like a flame

[1] From John G. Neihardt, *The Song of Three Friends*. Copyright, 1919, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

That rages over slough grass, pony tall.
They formed behind him in a solid wall
And halted at a lifting of his hand.

The troopers heard him bellow some command.
They saw him wheel and wave his rifle high;
And distant hills were peopled with the cry
He flung at Death, that mighty men of old,
Long dead, might hear the coming of the bold
And know the land still nursed the ancient breed.
Then, followed by a thundering stampede,
He charged the island where the rifles brawled.
And some who galloped nearest him recalled
In after days, what some may choose to doubt,
How suddenly the hubbuboo went out
In silence, and a wild white brilliance broke
About him, and the cloud of battle smoke
Was thronged with faces not of living men.
Then terribly the battle roared again.
And those who tell it saw him reel and sag
Against the stallion, like an empty bag,
Then slip beneath the mill of pony hoofs.

So Roman Nose, the Flame of Many Roofs,
Flared out. And round the island swept the foe —
Wrath-howling breakers with an undertow
Of pain that wailed and murmuring dismay.

From THE SONG OF THE INDIAN WARS

At Beecher's Island [1]

The dizzy prairie spun
With quirted ponies, weaving on the run
A many colored noose. So dances Death,
Bedizened like a harlot, when the breath

[1] From John G. Neihardt, *The Song of Three Friends*. Copyright, 1919, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Of Autumn flutes among the shedding boughs
And scarlets caper and the golds carouse
And bronzes trip it and the late green leaps.
And then, as when the howling winter heaps
The strippings of the hickory and oak
And hurls them in a haze of blizzard smoke
Along an open draw, the warriors formed
To eastward down the Rickaree, and stormed
Against the isle, their solid front astride
The shallow water.

"Wait!" the Colonel cried;
"Keep cool now!" — Would he never say the word?
They heard the falling horses shriek; they heard
The smack of smitten flesh, the whispering rush
Of arrows, bullets whipping through the brush
And flicked sand *phutting;* saw the rolling eyes
Of war-mad ponies, crooked battle cries
Lost in the uproar, faces in a blast
Of color, color, and the whirlwind last
Of all dear things forever.

"*Now!*"

The fear,
The fleet, sick dream of friendly things and dear
Dissolved in thunder; and between two breaths
Men sensed the sudden splendor that is Death's,
The wild clairvoyant wonder. Shadows screamed
Before the kicking Spencers, split and streamed
About the island in a flame-rent shroud.
And momently, with hoofs that beat the cloud,
Winged with the mad momentum of the charge,
A war horse loomed unnaturally large
Above the burning ring of rifles there,
Lit, sprawling, in the midst and took the air
And vanished. And the storming hoofs roared by.
And suddenly the sun, a handbreadth high,
Was peering through the clinging battle-blur.

LEW SARETT (1888–)

Lew Sarett is a practiced woodsman, has been a guide and a forest ranger, has spent most of his life in the deep woods and on high trails in the Rockies and in the Canadian Northwest. He has long studied Indian life at close range. Born in Chicago, Illinois, his early life was spent in the vicinity of Lake Superior. He received a law degree from the University of Illinois in 1916, but never practiced, preferring the trail and the campfire. The wilderness speaks from his first book, *Many Many Moons*, published in 1920. His Indian poem, *The Box of God*, won in 1921 one of the prizes bestowed by *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*. The next year this poem titled a volume, published by Holt, in which were included many of Sarett's best lyrics of the open. This book was later followed by *Slow Smoke*.

Sarett has done more to reveal the true spirit of the Indian, and to contrast the white viewpoint with that of the red man, than any contemporary poet. He has also written with beautiful originality of wild life. His poetry is both sensitive and robust and he has constantly enlarged his range. His study of Indian dances has enabled him to transfer their rhythms vividly into verse. He is never spurious or melodramatic. He works in material with which he is deeply familiar.

FOUR LITTLE FOXES

Speak gently, Spring, and make no sudden sound;
For in my windy valley, yesterday I found
New-born foxes squirming in the ground —
Speak gently.

Walk softly, March, forbear the bitter blow;
Her feet within a trap, her blood upon the snow,
The four little foxes saw their mother go —
Walk softly.

Go lightly, Spring, oh, give them no alarm;
When I covered them with boughs to shelter them from harm,
The thin blue foxes suckled at my arm —
Go lightly.

Step softly, March, with your rampant hurricane;
Nuzzling one another, and whimpering with pain,
The new little foxes are shivering in the rain —
Step softly.

THUNDERDRUMS

AN INDIAN WAR-MEDICINE DANCE

I

THE DRUMMERS SING

Beat on the buckskin, beat on the drums,
Hi! Hi! Hi! for the Thunderbird comes;
His eyes burn red with the blood of battle;
His wild wings roar in the medicine rattle.
Thunderbird-god, while our spirits dance,
Tip with your lightning the warrior's lance;
On shafts of wind, with heads of flame,
Build for us arrows that torture and maim;
Ho! may our ironwood war-clubs crash
With a thunderbolt head and a lightning flash.
Hi! Hi! Hi! hear the Cut-throat's doom
As our wild bells ring and our thunderdrums boom.

II

DOUBLE-BEAR DANCES

Hi! Hi! Hi!
My wild feet fly,
For I follow the track
Of a cowardly pack;

Footprints here,
Footprints there, —
Enemies near! —
Taint in the air!
Signs in the sod!
Ho! the Thunderbird-god
Gives me the eye
Of a hawk in the sky! —
Beat, beat on the drums,
For the Thunderbird comes.
Ho! Ho!
Ho! Ho!

III

JUMPING-RIVER DANCES

Ho! hear me shout —
A Pucker-skin scout
With a nose that is keen
For winds unclean.
Look! Look! Look!
At the distant nook,
Where the hill-winds drift
As the night-fogs lift:
Ten smokes I see
Of the Cut-throat Sioux —
Ten ghosts there will be, —
Ten plumes on my coup;
For my arms grow strong
With my medicine-song,
And a Pucker-skin scout
Has a heart that is stout.
Beat, beat on the drums,
For the Thunderbird comes.
Háh-yah-ah-háy!
Háh-yah-ah-háy!

IV

GHOST-WOLF DANCES

Ho! Ho! Ho!
In the winds that blow
From yonder hill,
When the night is still,
What do I hear
With my Thunderbird ear?
Down from the river
A gray wolf's wail?
Coyotes that quiver
And slink the tail? —
Ugh! enemies dying, —
And women crying! —
For Cut-throat men —
One, two . . . nine, ten.
Ho! Ho! Ho!
The Spirit-winds blow, —
Beat, beat on the drums
For the Thunderbird comes.
Ah-hah-háy!
Ah-hah-háy!

V

IRON-WIND DANCES

Over and under
The shaking sky,
The war-drums thunder
When I dance by! —
Ho! a warrior proud,
I dance on a cloud,
For my ax shall feel
The enemy reel;
My heart shall thrill
To a bloody kill, —

Ten Sioux dead
Split open of head! —
Look! to the West! —
The sky-line drips, —
Blood from the breast!
Blood from the lips!
Ho! when I dance by,
The war-drums thunder
Over and under
The shaking sky.
Beat, beat on the drums,
For the Thunderbird comes.
Wuh!
Wuh!

VI

THE DRUMMERS SING

Beat on the buckskin, beat on the drums,
Hi! Hi! Hi! for the Thunderbird comes;
His eyes glow red with the lust for battle,
And his big wings roar in the medicine-rattle.
Thunderbird-god, while our spirits dance,
Tip with your lightning the warrior's lance;
On shafts of wind, with heads of flame,
Build for us arrows that torture and maim;
Ho! may our ironwood war-clubs crash
With a thunderbolt head and a lightning flash.
Hi! Hi! Hi! hear the Cut-throat's doom,
As our wild bells ring and our thunderdrums boom.

EDWIN FORD PIPER (1871–)

This poet is a Nebraskan. He has taught since 1905 at the State University of Iowa, where he is now a full Professor of English. He graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1897 and received an M.A. therefrom in

1900. Three years later he studied for a time at Harvard. His first book, *Barbed Wire and Other Poems*, was not published until 1918. It was followed by *Wayfarers*. The best of the two books has been combined in *Barbed Wire and Wayfarers*, published by Macmillan. Subsequent to this is *Paintrock Road* (Macmillan, 1927).

Mr. Piper revives the reality as well as the folklore of his region. He has developed a strong and vivid gift for narrative. He is one of the indigenous poets of the West who are excelling as accurate interpreters.

THE LAST ANTELOPE [1]

Behind the board fence at the banker's house
The slender, tawn-gray creature starves and thirsts
In agony of fear. A dog may growl,
It cowers; the cockcrow shakes it with alarm.

White frost lay heavy on the buffalo grass
That winter morning when three graceful shapes
Slipped by the saddle-back across the ridge
Along the rutted pathway to the creek.
In former years the track was bare, and worn
With feet of upland creatures every day.
A boy spied these three outlaws. Two hours' chase,
Fifty pursuers, and the ways all stopped, —
Guns, dogs, and fences. Torn by the barbed wire,
Drilled by a dozen buckshot, one; the next,
O'erheaped by snapping jaws, cried piteously
An instant; but the last on treacherous ice
Crashed through, a captive.

Ropes — the jolting wagon —
Its heart was audible as you touched its fur.

[1] From Edwin Ford Piper, *Barbed Wire and Wayfarers*. Copyright, 1924, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

Behind the board fence at the banker's house, —
O, once it capered wild on dewy grass
In grace and glee of dancing, arrowy bounds! —
At the banker's house, behind the high board fence
The last slim pronghorn perishes of fear.

PART VII

JOSEPHINE PINCKNEY (1895–)

Miss Pinckney was born in Charleston, South Carolina, of a long line of rice planters. She still owns the rice plantation about which many of her poems are written, though she plants it no longer. She went to school in Charleston, did special work in English at the College of Charleston, Columbia University, and Radcliffe College. She was founder of the Poetry Society of South Carolina, a rallying ground for many of the most distinguished Southern poets. With Miss Ravenel she is one of the two newer women writers of the South who lead its literary revival, so far, at least, as poetry is concerned. Her one book, *Sea-Drinking Cities* (Harper), is pictorial in a high degree. Her poems have appeared in various magazines. She won the Southern Prize of 1927 for the best poem by a Southerner and the Caroline Sinkler Prize of 1928 for the best book of poems published by a Southerner.

LONESOME GRABEYA'AD

Keep a-runnin'! Keep a-runnin'! Fiah gwinter obertake you
Way down yonder een de lonesome grabeya'ad!

Beneath a metallic sunset
Brightening to bronze green like the breast-feathers of wild turkeys,
An unfrequented road with its two-fold thread of white sand

Cutting red bedded needles, thick from the long-leafed pines
Parted close-grown woods.

Dragging heavy-footed
Through scuffing sand some negroes came in a bullock-led procession,
Such as in old dark days might have walked to placate dark gods.

The mounted driver was sorrowful-eyed as the bullock that drew him
In a huge-wheeled cart, through the somber crowd of the templed
And purple-bodied pine-trees.

A coffin was jutting starkly
Out at the back, home-made, and painted a rusty black,
And on its top was hammered in letters of shiny tin,
"GOOD LUCK."

With faces averted they pass to the bare, square burying-ground
Where in a shallow gash scooped in the yellow clay,
They put him and cover him over, crooning meanwhile and droning
Words of forgotten meaning that somehow still utter their wild thoughts:
Aa-aa-anh! Aa-aa-anh! Yedde ol' Egyp' a-yowlin'
Way down yonder een de lonesome grabeya'ad . . .

Then in the following days by twos and by threes returning
Always in high day-time, curious, curdled in marrow,
They bring small things for his comfort, medicines left from his illness,
The cup and the bowl he used, and rice for his terrible hunger,

— Food which sooner or later was eaten if nobody watched it —
Then they thankfully leave the graveyard buried in dark woods,
In pines which hum the varying rhythms of spirituals:
Oo-oo-oo! Oo-oo-oo! Yedde dat hammer a-poundin', 31
Way down yonder een de lonesome grabeya'ad . . .

BEATRICE RAVENEL (1870–)

Miss Ravenel is one of the late-comers among the Southern poets. Du Bose Heyward has remarked that her highly individual work in *The Arrow of Lightning* (Vinal) has decidedly added to the weight of evidence that the South is in the midst of a literary revival; and before Amy Lowell died she had expressed herself as enthusiastic over Miss Ravenel's poems. She spoke of certain of Miss Ravenel's lines as being "so extraordinarily simple, almost not poetry at all, but just talk, and yet for that very reason they are the more poetry, and come very near to actually expressing what cannot be expressed."

One of the poems here chosen to represent Miss Ravenel's work at its most powerful, is of a different kind. *The Alligator* is thoroughly indigenous and vividly atmospheric. Miss Ravenel and Miss Pinckney are to-day the two poets, among the women, who most distinctively represent their section of the country.

Miss Ravenel, like Miss Pinckney later on, was schooled in Charleston. She attended Radcliffe College as a special student for several years. In 1900, she married for the first time. Her second marriage came in 1926. She has written short stories and novelettes, won the Caroline Sinkler Prize awarded by the Poetry Society of South Carolina in 1926, and received in the same year the Virginia Poetry Society's prize for the best poem by an American.

THE ALLIGATOR

He roars in the swamp.
For two hundred years he has clamored in Spring;
He is fourteen feet long, and his track scars the earth in the night-time,
His voice scars the air.

Oak-boughs have furred their forks, are in velvet;
Jessamine crackle their fire-new sparks;
The grass is full of a nameless wildness of color, of flowers in solution.
The glass-blower birds twist their brittle imaginings over the multiplied colors of water.

But the counterpoint of the Spring —
Exacerbate, resonant,
Raw like beginnings of worlds,
Cry of the mud made flesh, made particular, personal,
Midnight assailing the morning, myopic sound, blinded by sun, —
Roars from the swamp.
A thing in itself,
Not only alive, but the very existence of death would be news to it.
Will —
Will without inflection,
Making us shudder, ashamed of our own triviality —
The bull alligator roars in the swamp.

This is queer country.
One does not walk nor climb for a view;
It comes right up to the porch, like a hound to be patted.
Under our hog-back
The swamp, inchoate creature, fumbles its passage, still nearer;
Puffing a vapor of flowers before it.

This week there are ponds in the wood, vertiginous skies
underfoot,
Pondering heaven.
Next week, in the pashing mud of the footpath
Fish may be gasping, baffled in semi-solids.
The negroes will eat them.

This is queer country.
Thick-blooded compulsive sound,
Like scum in the branch, chokes, mantles the morning.

Sangarrah! . . . Sangarrah! . . . Sangarrah! . . .

Two hundred years back —
And the medicine-man of the Yemassee
Sat in the thick of the swamp, on the ridge where the
cypresses flung
Their elfin stockade.
Wrinkled his chest as the cast-off skin of the blacksnake,
The hide of his cheeks hung square and ridged as the
hide
Of the grown alligator.
A young alligator squirmed on his naked knees
While he muttered its lesson.

That was strong medicine. Over the old man's eyes
Drooped the holy beloved crest of the swan-plumes;
Otter-skin straps cut under his arms
From the breastplate of conch-shells.
Fawn-trotters fell from his boot-tops; the white beloved
mantle
Lined with raw scarlet, hung on the gum-tree, along
with the ocelot quiver
And locust-wood bow.
He had fasted, drinking the dark button snake-root.
He shuddered,
Calling the secret name, the name of the Manneyto,
Y-O-He,
Never known by the people.

On the infant saurian, long-lived, ruled into patterns, his hands
Moved, taking the shape of a sharp-curved arrow;
He spoke, teaching its lesson, calling its name;
"Nanneb-Chunchaba,
Fish-like-a-Mountain,
Remember!

"By the day-sun and the night-sun,
By the new beloved fire of the corn-feast;
By the Arrow of Lightning, that came from the storm,
From the Spirit of Fire to the ancient chief of the Yemassee —
Totem of Yemassee!
Let our voice be remembered.

"We go from the hunting-grounds of our fathers,
The lands that we took, fighting north through the man-eating Westoes,
Fall from our hands.
In the hills of our dead, in the powdering flesh that conceived us,
Shall the white man plant corn.

"The trails where we fought with the fierce Tuscarora
Will call us in vain;
No pictures of skillful canoemen will green Isundiga paint clear in his waters.
We shall be cut from the land as the medicine-man cuts the totem
From the arm of the outcast.

"*From the sky they cannot cut our totem!*

"My name too shall vanish.
When the drums and the music for three days are silent
And men praise me under the peach-trees,
My over-wise spirit

Shall root itself here, as the oak-tree takes hold.
Who will wait for me? Which of the spirits
That have made of my body a lodge, that have twisted
my sinews
As women twist withes for their baskets, will claim
habitation,
That have spoken their wisdom
Out of my mouth?
I shall hide from them all, as the war-chiefs
Cover their lives with the tree-tops,
Leaving them safe when they go on the war-path.
I shall sleep in this place.

"In the new days,
The days when our voice shall be silent,
Speak for the Yemassee!
Nanneb-Chunchaba, you, little Fish-like-a-Mountain,
Shout through the forest the terrible war-cry of Ye-
massee!

"*Sangarrah! . . . Sangarrah-me! . . . Sangarrah-me!*
Shout! I shall hear you!
Sangarrah! . . ."

For two hundred years —
Will, without inflexion —
The bull alligator
Roars from the swamp
In the Spring.

CLAUDE McKAY (1889–)

This poet is a Jamaican negro whose recent novel, *Home to Harlem*, is said to be the best yet written about that negro city in New York City above 125th Street. It was published a half-dozen years after the original publication of McKay's best poems in *Harlem Shadows*

(which has since appeared through Harcourt, Brace in a new edition). Max Eastman introduced the original volume. McKay's former work as poet was in *Songs of Jamaica*, and *Spring in New Hampshire*, the latter published in England in 1920.

McKay first came to the United States in 1912 and studied agriculture at Kansas State College. He then earned his living at hard jobs, and, finally, finding his way to New York, became associate editor of the recent transformation of the old *Masses*, *The Liberator*. He is now abroad working on a new volume. McKay's poetry antedated the recent new negro poetry of Cullen, Langston Hughes, and others. He was the first since Paul Laurence Dunbar to achieve racial expression deeply impressed with his own personality.

AMERICA

Although she feeds me bread of bitterness,
And sinks into my throat her tiger's tooth,
Stealing my breath of life, I will confess
I love this cultured hell that tests my youth.
Her vigor flows like tides into my blood,
Giving me strength against her hate,
Her bigness sweeps my being like a flood.
Yet, as a rebel fronts a king in state,
I stand within her walls with not a shred
Of terror, malice, not a word of jeer.
Darkly I gaze into the days ahead,
And see her might and granite wonders there,
Beneath the touch of Time's unerring hand,
Like priceless treasures sinking in the sand.

COUNTEE CULLEN (1903–)

Cullen is one of the youngest of our negro poets. He was born in New York City. His first book appeared

only three years ago, through Harper, entitled, *Color*. While he often writes racially he also puts into practice a contention that the negro poet should be judged by standards applying simply to any poet, and not be expected always to be "racial." Cullen is an increasingly good technician. Beside *Color* he has produced *Copper Sun*, *Ballad of the Brown Girl*, and has also edited an anthology of negro poets, *Caroling Dusk*. He is a contributing editor to *Opportunity*, the negro literary journal, and has recently married the daughter of W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, the eminent negro sociologist. This last year he was awarded one of the Guggenheim fellowships to accomplish certain literary work abroad.

Cullen's poetic development has been precocious. A relative, Charles Cullen, is a distinguished negro artist. It is entirely possible that Countée Cullen may develop the most notable negro poetic talent of our time. Even now, at the age of twenty-five, he has fine, salient achievement to his credit.

HERITAGE

What is Africa to me:
Copper sun or scarlet sea,
Jungle star or jungle track,
Strong bronzed men, or regal black
Women from whose loins I sprang
When the birds of Eden sang?
One three centuries removed
From the scenes his fathers loved,
Spicy grove, cinnamon tree,
What is Africa to me?

So I lie who all day long
Want no sound except the song
Sung by wild barbaric birds
Goading massive jungle herds,

Juggernauts of flesh that pass
Trampling tall defiant grass
Where young forest lovers lie
Plighting troth beneath the sky.

So I lie, who always hear
Though I cram against my ear
Both my thumbs, and keep them there,
Great drums beating through the air.
So I lie, whose fount of pride,
Dear distress, and joy allied,
Is my sombre flesh and skin
With the dark blood dammed within
Like great pulsing tides of wine
That I fear, must burst the fine
Channels of the chafing net
Where they surge and foam and fret.

Africa? A book one thumbs
Listlessly till slumber comes.
Unremembered are her bats
Circling through the night, her cats
Crouching in the river reeds
Stalking gentle food that feeds
By the river brink; no more
Does the bugle-throated roar
Cry that monarch claws have leapt
From the scabbards where they slept.

Silver snakes that once a year
Doff the lovely coats you wear
Seek no covert in your fear
Lest a mortal eye should see:
What's your nakedness to me?
Here no leprous flowers rear
Fierce corollas in the air;
Here no bodies sleek and wet,

Dripping mingled rain and sweat,
Tread the savage measures of
Jungle boys and girls in love.
What is last year's snow to me,
Last year's anything? The tree
Budding yearly must forget
How its past arose or set —
Bough and blossom, flower, fruit,
Even what shy bird with mute
Wonder at her travail there,
Meekly labored in its hair.
One three centuries removed
From the scenes his fathers loved,
Spicy grove, cinnamon tree,
What is Africa to me?

So I lie, who find no peace
Night or day, no slight release
From the unremittant beat
Made by cruel padded feet
Walking through my body's street.
Up and down they go, and back,
Treading out a jungle track.
So I lie, who never quite
Safely sleep from rain at night —
I can never rest at all
When the rain begins to fall;
Like a soul gone mad with pain
I must watch its weird refrain;
Ever must I twist and squirm,
Writhing like a baited worm,
While its primal measures drip
Through my body, crying, "Strip!
Doff this new exuberance.
Come and dance the Lover's Dance!"
In an old remembered way
Rain works on me night and day.

Quaint, outlandish heathen gods
Black men fashioned out of rods,
Clay, and brittle bits of stone,
In a likeness like their own,—
My conversion came high-priced;
I belong to Jesus Christ,
Preacher of humility;
Heathen gods are naught to me.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
So I make an idle boast,
Jesus of the twice turned cheek,
Lamb of God, although I speak
With my mouth, thus, in my heart
Do I play a double part.
Ever at thy glowing altar
Must my heart grow sick and falter
Wishing He I served were black.
Thinking then it would not lack
Precedent of pain to guide it
Let who would or might deride it;
Surely then this flesh would know
Yours had borne a kindred woe.
Lord, I fashion dark gods, too,
Daring even to give to You
Dark, despairing features where
Crowned with dark rebellious hair,
Patience wavers just so much as
Mortal grief compels, while touches
Quick and hot, of anger, rise
To smitten cheek and weary eyes.
Lord, forgive me if my need
Sometimes shapes a human creed.

All day long and all night through,
One thing only must I do:

Quench my pride and cool my blood,
Lest I perish in the flood.
Lest a hidden ember set
Timber that I thought was wet
Burning like the dryest flax,
Melting like the merest wax,
Lest the grave restore its dead.
Not yet has my heart or head
In the least way realized
They and I are civilized.

TABLEAU

Locked arm in arm they cross the way,
The black boy and the white,
The golden splendor of the day,
The sable pride of night.

From lowered blinds the dark folk stare
And here the fair folk talk,
Indignant that these two should dare
In unison to walk.

Oblivious to look and word
They pass, and see no wonder
That lightning brilliant as a sword
Should blaze the path of thunder.

LANGSTON HUGHES (1902–)

It was Carl Van Vechten who first presented the work of this young negro poet to the world, in his introduction to Mr. Hughes's first volume, *The Weary Blues*. This volume was soon followed by a second, *Fine Clothes to the Jew*. The title-poem of the first book won first prize in the 1925 contest held by the negro maga-

zine, *Opportunity*, for the best poems written by negroes during that year.

Mr. Hughes had been working as bus-boy and dummy-boy at a hotel in Washington, at the age of twenty-three; but for several years, in the course of working his way about America and Europe, he had amused himself by writing poems, never thinking of publishing them. Then the first poem he sent to any editor was accepted by *The Crisis*, a negro magazine published in New York. It was both a surprise and an encouragement.

Langston Hughes was born in Joplin, Missouri. Before he was twelve he had lived in Kansas City, Buffalo, Colorado Springs, and on his father's timber ranch in Mexico. Then he went to high school in Cleveland, Ohio. Later, for one year he studied at Columbia; but he soon roved afield. He has truck-farmed on Staten Island, worked for a winter on an old ship anchored in the Hudson (where he wrote his first poems), cruised to the Azores, Canaries and to western Africa, been to Holland and roved over Europe, finding employment variously as cabaret "bouncer" in Paris and as beach-comber in Genoa. Just at present he is a student at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania; but he has the roving foot, and is always likely, at any moment, to "up stakes and travel." His poems are chiefly concerned with his travels and with life in Harlem; and he has adapted the characteristic Negro "blues" rhythm to verse in a manner both moving and melodious.

THE WEARY BLUES

Droning a drowsy syncopated tune,
Rocking back and forth to a mellow croon,
    I heard a Negro play.
Down on Lenox Avenue the other night
By the pale dull pallor of an old gas light

He did a lazy sway . . . .
He did a lazy sway . . . .
To the tune o' those Weary Blues.
With his ebony hands on each ivory key
He made that poor piano moan with melody.
O Blues!
Swaying to and fro on his rickety stool
He played that sad raggy tune like a musical fool.
Sweet Blues!
Coming from a black man's soul.
O Blues!
In a deep song voice with a melancholy tone
I heard that Negro sing, that old piano moan —
"Ain't got nobody in all this world,
Ain't got nobody but ma self.
I's gwine to quit ma frownin'
And put ma troubles on the shelf."
Thump, thump, thump, went his foot on the floor.
He played a few chords then he sang some more —
"I got the Weary Blues
And I can't be satisfied.
Got the Weary Blues
And can't be satisfied —
I ain't happy no mo'
And I wish that I had died."
And far into the night he crooned that tune.
The stars went out and so did the moon.
The singer stopped playing and went to bed
While the Weary Blues echoed through his head.
He slept like a rock or a man that's dead.

GYPSY MAN

My man's a gypsy
Cause he never does come home.
My man's a gypsy —
He never does come home.

I'm gonna be a gypsy woman
Fer I can't stay here alone.

Once I was in Memphis,
I mean Tennessee.
Once I was in Memphis,
Said Tennessee.
But I had to leave cause
Nobody there was good to me.

I met a yellow papa,
He took my last thin dime.
Met a yellow papa,
He took my last thin dime.
I give it to him cause I loved him
But I'll have more sense next time.

Love, Oh, love is
Such a strange disease.
Love, Oh, love is
Such a strange disease.
When it hurts yo' heart you
Sho can't find no ease.

JAMES WELDON JOHNSON (1871–)

James Weldon Johnson is a colored man of various achievement. His *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, compiled and edited six years ago, was a fine service to his race. He also had the distinction in 1915 of having his translation of the libretto of the Spanish grand opera, *Goyescas*, sung by the Metropolitan Opera Company. He was born in Jacksonville and educated at Atlanta University and at Columbia. For some years thereafter he and his brother Rosamund Johnson collaborated in a number of popular song successes. James Weldon Johnson also saw seven years' service as

United States Consul in Venezuela and Nicaragua. His first book of poems appeared in 1918, entitled *Fifty Years and Other Poems*. He wrote also *The Autobiography of an Ex-colored Man*, and his most recent work is to be found in *God's Trombones* (Viking Press), seven negro sermons in verse. Beside all this he has edited with prefaces the first and second Books of Negro Spirituals, both excellent and inspiring compilations.

Folk-music and folk-sermons are the material in which Johnson works most naturally and from which he evolves his best poetic effects. He might be called a negro poet of the old school, but he is none the less vivid and vigorous. His place is distinguished among the literary people of his race.

GO DOWN DEATH

A FUNERAL SERMON

WEEP not, weep not,
She is not dead;
She's resting in the bosom of Jesus.
Heart-broken husband — weep no more;
Grief-stricken son — weep no more;
Left-lonesome daughter — weep no more;
She's only just gone home.

Day before yesterday morning,
God was looking down from his great, high heaven,
Looking down on all his children,
And his eye fell on Sister Caroline,
Tossing on her bed of pain.
And God's big heart was touched with pity,
With the everlasting pity.
And God sat back on his throne,
And he commanded that tall, bright angel standing at his right hand:
Call me Death!

And that tall, bright angel cried in a voice
That broke like a clap of thunder:
Call Death! — Call Death!
And the echo sounded down the streets of heaven
Till it reached away back to that shadowy place,
Where Death waits with his pale, white horses.

And Death heard the summons,
And he leaped on his fastest horse,
Pale as a sheet in the moonlight.
Up the golden street Death galloped,
And the hoofs of his horse struck fire from the gold,
But they didn't make no sound.
Up Death rode to the Great White Throne,
And waited for God's command.

And God said: Go Down, Death, go down,
Go down to Savannah, Georgia,
Down in Yamacraw,
And find Sister Caroline.
She's borne the burden and heat of the day,
She's labored long in my vineyard,
And she's tired —
She's weary —
Go down, Death, and bring her to me.

And Death didn't say a word,
But he loosed the reins on his pale, white horse,
And he clamped the spurs to his bloodless sides,
And out and down he rode,
Through heaven's pearly gates,
Past suns and moons and stars;
On Death rode,
And the foam from his horse was like a comet in the sky;
On Death rode,
Leaving the lightning's flash behind;
Straight on down he came.

While we were watching round her bed,
She turned her eyes and looked away,
She saw what we couldn't see;
She saw Old Death. She saw Old Death,
Coming like a falling star.
But Death didn't frighten Sister Caroline;
He looked to her like a welcome friend.
And she whispered to us: I'm going home,
And she smiled and closed her eyes.

And Death took her up like a baby,
And she lay in his icy arms,
But she didn't feel no chill.
And Death began to ride again —
Up beyond the evening star,
Out beyond the morning star,
Into the glittering light of glory,
On to the Great White Throne.
And there he laid Sister Caroline
On the loving breast of Jesus.
And Jesus took his own hand and wiped away her tears,
And he smoothed the furrows from her face;
And the angels sang a little song,
And Jesus rocked her in his arms,
And kept a-saying: Take your rest,
Take your rest, take your rest.

Weep not — weep not,
She is not dead;
She's resting in the bosom of Jesus.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

For collateral reading in connection with the several groups of poets included in the American section, the editors recommend the following:

PART I

Barker, Elsa, *The Book of Love.* Duffield and Company

Bates, Katharine Lee, *The Pilgrim Ship*, etc. Houghton Mifflin Company

Beers, Henry A., *Poems.* Yale University Press

Cather, Willa Sibert, *April Twilights.* Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Cawein, Madison, *Collected Works.* Small, Maynard and Company

Coates, Florence Earle, *Lyrics of Life*, etc. Apply to author

Colton, Arthur, *Harps of Babylon.* Henry Holt and Company

Cone, Helen Gray, *A Chant of Love for England*, etc. E. P. Dutton and Company

Crapsey, Adelaide, *Poems.* Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.; also, Manas Press

Dargan, Olive Tilford, *Path Flower*, etc. Charles Scribner's Sons

Garrison, Theodosia, *The Joy o' Life*, *The Earth Cry.* Mitchell Kennerley

Hooker, Brian, *Poems.* Yale University Press

Jones, Thomas S., Jr., *The Rose Jar*, *The Voice in the Silence*, *Sonnets of the Cross.* Thomas B. Mosher, Portland, Maine

Ledoux, Louis V., *The Shadow of Ætna.* G. P. Putnam's Sons

Monroe, Harriet, *Supernal Dialogue.* Also other poems. Apply to Miss Monroe, care of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*

Norton, Grace Fallow, *Sister of the Wind*, *Little Gray Songs from St. Joseph's.* Houghton Mifflin Company

Rice, Cale Young, *Collected Works.* The Century Company

Rittenhouse, Jessie B., *The Door of Dreams*, *The Lifted Cup.* Houghton Mifflin Company

Robinson, Corinne Roosevelt, *Poems.* Charles Scribner's Sons
Santayana, George, *Sonnets, and Other Poems.* Charles Scribner's Sons
Scollard, Clinton, *Selected Poems.* Houghton Mifflin Company
Thomas, Edith Matilda, *Selected Poems.* Harper and Brothers
Towne, Charles Hanson, *Selected Poems.* D. Appleton and Company
Upson, Arthur, *Lyrics and Sonnets.* Thomas B. Mosher
Van Dyke, Henry, *Collected Poems.* Charles Scribner's Sons
Walsh, Thomas, *The Pilgrim Kings*, etc. Sherman, French and Company
Wilkinson, Florence, *The Ride Home*, etc. Houghton Mifflin Company
Wood, Charles Erskine Scott, *The Poet in the Desert.* Apply to author

PART III

Akins, Zoë, *Interpretations.* Mitchell Kennerley
Anderson, Maxwell, *Full Circle. The New Republic*
Arensberg, Walter Conrad, *Idols.* Houghton Mifflin Company
Benét, Laura, *Noah's Dove.* Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.
Bishop, John Peale (with Edmund Wilson), *The Undertaker's Garland.* Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
Bradley, William Aspenwall, *Old Christmas and Other Kentucky Tales in Verse.* Houghton Mifflin Company
Braley, Berton, *Songs of a Workaday World, A Hurdy-Gurdy on Parnassus.* D. Appleton and Company
Brink, Roscoe W., *Down the River.* Henry Holt and Company
Burnet, Dana, *Poems.* Harper and Brothers
Burr, Amelia Josephine, *Selected Lyrics.* Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.
Burt, Struthers, *When I Grew Up to Middle Age.* Charles Scribner's Sons
Carlin, Francis, *The Cairn of Stars.* Henry Holt and Company

CLEGHORN, SARAH N., *Portraits and Protests.* Henry Holt and Company

DALY, THOMAS AUGUSTIN, *Songs of Wedlock.* David McKay, Philadelphia. *Carmina, Canzoni.* Harcourt, Brace and Company

DAVIDSON, GUSTAV, *Twenty Sonnets, Thirst of the Antelope.* Blue Faun Publications, New York

DAVIES, MARY CAROLYN, *Youth Riding.* The Macmillan Company

DE CASSERES, BENJAMIN, *The Shadow Eater.* American Library Service

DELL, FLOYD, *Love in Greenwich Village.* Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

DODD, LEE WILSON, *The Great Enlightenment: A Satire in Verse, with Other Selected Verses.* Harper and Brothers

DRISCOLL, LOUISE, *Garden Graces.* The Macmillan Company

EASTMAN, MAX, *Poems.* Mitchell Kennerley

ERSKINE, JOHN, *Collected Poems.* Bobbs-Merrill Company

FISHER, MAHLON LEONARD, *Lyrics Between the Years.* Williamsport, Pa.: The Clayton Spicer Press. *Sonnets — A First Series.* Apply to author

FLANNER, HILDEGARDE, *A Tree in Bloom.* Gelber, Lilienthal, Inc., The Lantern Press, San Francisco. *Time's Profile.* The Macmillan Company.

GRIFFITH, WILLIAM, *Loves and Losses of Pierrot.* E. P. Dutton and Company

GUITERMAN, ARTHUR, *I Sing the Pioneer, Wildwood Fables.* E. P. Dutton and Company

HAGEDORN, HERMANN, *Poems and Ballads.* The Macmillan Company

HALL, AMANDA BENJAMIN, *The Dancer in the Shrine.* Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.

HALL, HAZEL, *Curtains.* Dodd, Mead and Company

HENDERSON, ALICE CORBIN, *Red Earth, The Spinning Woman of the Sky.* Ralph Fletcher Seymour, Chicago

HENDERSON, DANIEL, *Harp in the Winds.* D. Appleton and Company

HILLYER, ROBERT, *The Seventh Hill.* The Viking Press

HOLDEN, RAYMOND, *Granite and Alabaster.* The Macmillan Company

HOYT, HELEN, *Apples Here in my Basket.* Harcourt, Brace and Company

HOYT, HENRY M., *Dry Points.* Frank Shay, New York

HUCKFIELD, LEYLAND, *Rough Trails and Silver Meadows. The Midland*, Iowa City, Iowa
JOHNS, ORRICK, *Asphalt, Black Branches.* Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
KEMP, HARRY, *The Sea and the Dunes.* Brentano's
KENYON, BERNICE LESBIA, *Songs of Unrest.* Charles Scribner's Sons
KILMER, JOYCE, *Collected Works.* Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.
LEE, MUNA, *Sea Change.* The Macmillan Company
LONG, HANIEL, *Poems.* Moffat, Yard and Company
MITCHELL, RUTH COMFORT, *The Night Court.* D. Appleton and Company
MORGAN, ANGELA, *Selected Poems, Silver Clothes.* Dodd, Mead and Company
MORLEY, CHRISTOPHER, *Poems.* Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc.
MORTON, DAVID, *Ships in Harbor, Nocturnes and Autumnals.* G. P. Putnam's Sons
NATHAN, ROBERT, *Youth Grows Old.* Robert M. McBride Company
NICOLSON, J. U., *King of the Black Isles.* Pascal Covici, Chicago
O'NEILL, ROSE, *The Master-Mistress.* Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
O'SHEEL, SHAEMAS, *Jealous of Dead Leaves.* Horace Liveright
PULSIFER, HAROLD TROWBRIDGE, *Mothers and Men.* Houghton Mifflin Company
REED, JOHN, *Sangar. Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*
ROBERTS, ELIZABETH MADOX, *Under the Tree.* The Viking Press
RYAN, KATHRYN WHITE, *Golden Pheasant.* G. P. Putnam's Sons
SCHAUFFLER, ROBERT HAVEN, *Scum of the Earth.* Houghton Mifflin Company
SEEGER, ALAN, *Collected Poems.* Charles Scribner's Sons
STARRETT, VINCENT, *Ebony Flame, Flame and Dust.* Pascal Covici, Chicago
TIETJENS, EUNICE, *Profiles from China.* Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
UNTERMEYER, JEAN STARR, *Steep Ascent.* The Macmillan Company
WATTLES, WILLARD, *Lanterns in Gethsemane.* E. P. Dutton and Company
WELLES, WINIFRED, *The Hesitant Heart.* B. W. Huebsch. *This Delicate Love.* The Viking Press

WHEELOCK, JOHN HALL, *The Black Panther, The Bright Doom.* Charles Scribner's Sons
WILKINSON, MARGUERITE, *Citadels.* The Macmillan Company
WOOD, CLEMENT, *Glad of Earth, The Earth Turns South, Jehovah.* E. P. Dutton and Company

PART IV

BELLAMANN, HENRY, *The Upward Pass.* Houghton Mifflin Company
BRODY, ALTER, *A Family Album.* The Viking Press
CABELL, JAMES BRANCH, *From the Hidden Way.* Robert M. McBride
CALKINS, CLINCH, *Poems.* Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.
CHILTON, ELEANOR CARROLL (with HERBERT AGAR and WILLIS FISHER), *Fire and Sleet and Candlelight.* John Day Company
COFFIN, ROBERT P. TRISTRAM, *Christchurch.* A. and C. Boni (Thomas Seltzer). *Dew and Bronze.* A. and C. BONI. *Golden Falcon.* The Macmillan Company
CONKLING, HILDA, *Shoes of the Wind.* Frederick A. Stokes and Company
CRANE, NATHALIA, *The Singing Crow.* A. and C. Boni (Thomas Seltzer)
DAMON, S. FOSTER, *Astrolabe.* Harper and Brothers
DAVIDSON, DONALD, *The Tall Men, An Outland Piper.* Houghton Mifflin Company
HENDERSON, W. B. DRAYTON, *The New Argonautica.* The Macmillan Company.
EDMAN, IRWIN, *Poems.* Simon and Schuster
EVANS, ABBIE HUSTON, *Outcrop.* Harper and Brothers
GILBERT, WARREN, *The Joy Ride and Other Poems.* Boni and Liveright
GIOVANNITTI, ARTURO, *Arrows in the Gale.* Hillacre Bookhouse
LAING, ALEXANDER, *Fool's Errand.* Doubleday, Doran
LARRSEN, ELLERY, *O, City, Cities.* Payson and Clark
MEEKER, MARJORIE, *Colour of Water.* Harold Vinal
MULLINS, HELENE, *Earthbound and Other Poems.* Harper and Brothers
NORTH, JESSICA NELSON, *The Long Leash.* Houghton Mifflin Company
ROBINSON, HENRY MORTON, *Buck Fever.* Duffield and Company

SCHNEIDER, ISIDOR, *The Temptation of Anthony and Other Poems.* Boni and Liveright

STROBEL, MARION, *Lost City.* Houghton Mifflin Company. *Once in a Blue Moon.* Harcourt, Brace and Company

TATE, ALLEN, *Mr. Pope and Other Poems.* Minton, Balch and Company

WALLIS, J. H., *Laughter of Omnipotence.* Harold Vinal

WHALER, JAMES, *Hale's Pond.* Harold Vinal

WOLF, ROBERT, *After Disillusion.* A. and C. Boni

PART V

BLACK, MACKNIGHT, *Machinery.* Horace Liveright

EVANS, DONALD, *Sonnets from the Patagonian.* Nicholas L. Brown, New York City

LOY, MINA, *Ova.* Three Mountains Press, Paris

MARCH, JOSEPH MONCURE, *The Wild Party, The Set-Up.* Covici, Friede

TURBYFILL, MARK, *Marriage with Space, and Other Poems.* Pascal Covici, Chicago

PART VI

CLARK, BADGER, *Sun and Saddle-Leather.* Richard Badger, Boston

DRESBACH, GLENN WARD, *Enchanted Mesa, Colours of the West.* Henry Holt and Company

FERRIL, THOMAS HORNSBY, *High Passage.* Yale University Press

KNIBBS, HENRY HERBERT, *Riders of the Stars, Songs of the Trail.* Houghton Mifflin Company

VESTAL, STANLEY, *Fandango.* Houghton Mifflin Company

PART VII

BAKER, KARLE WILSON, *Blue Smoke, Burning Bush.* Yale University Press

HEYWARD, DUBOSE, *Skylines and Horizons.* The Macmillan Company

NEGRO POETS: See *Caroling Dusk*, an anthology edited by COUNTÉE CULLEN. Harper and Brothers

PERCY, WILLIAM ALEXANDER, *Sappho in Levkas.* Yale University Press

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